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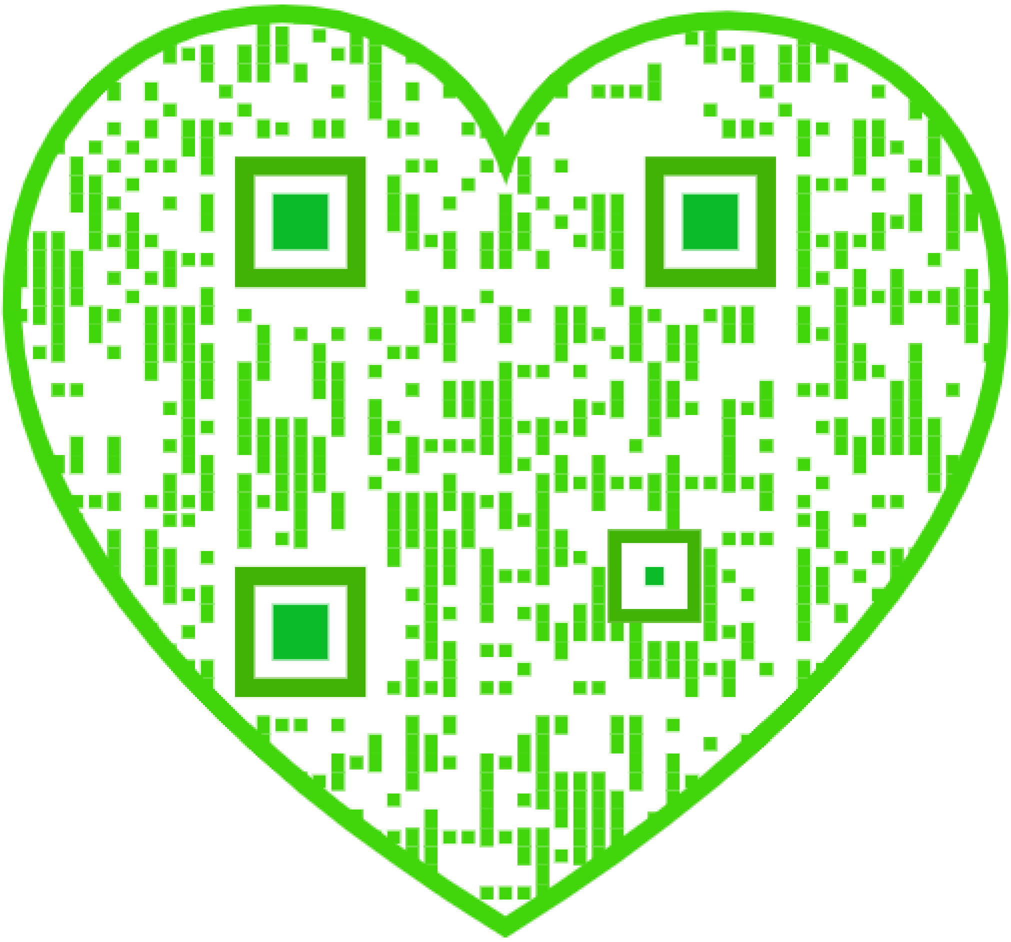
Crittall Windows offers an expanded range of powder-coated finishes – P19



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Crittall's expanded range of steel finishes offers architects a powerful tool to bring personality, individuality and nuance to any project. The future of steel fenestration is no longer confined to black. Now is the time to be bold, be creative and embrace the full spectrum of possibility...

See page 19 for more details.

welcome...

...to the April issue of ABC&D magazine...

We delve into the world of residential architecture this month, beginning on page 04 with a look at Lee Terrace, a new build family home in Blackheath. Redeveloped by Mailen Design, the former triple garage infill plot has been transformed into a three-bedroom, free-standing property which takes its inspiration from the historic conservation area in which it sits and the design of traditional mews houses.

Our second project piece on page 10 explores Alison Brooks Architects' Rubicon development. This new, net-zero project has been designed for the University of Cambridge and The Hill Group and redefines community living by merging warehouse loft typologies with the collegiate court. Offering 186 homes over 0.74 hectares, Rubicon is rooted in cycle-centred mobility, serving as a welcoming gateway and defining the urban edge of the Eddington masterplan.

This month's Hot Topic (page 20) discusses the rise in natural insulation specification for modern homes; Paul Webb looks at how long-term value can be achieved through a successful flooring specification on page 30; and on page 38, Luke Brooks explains how lime plasters can significantly enhance thermal performance in period properties without risking architectural heritage.

Andy Lake looks at the role played by fire safety glass in modern healthcare design on page 40; Rory McGoldrick discusses strategies integrating terrorism protection into urban planning and landscaping on page 48; and on page 56, Lee Stuart explores the shift toward creating people-centric warehouse environments for today's workforces.

...from all at ABC&D...

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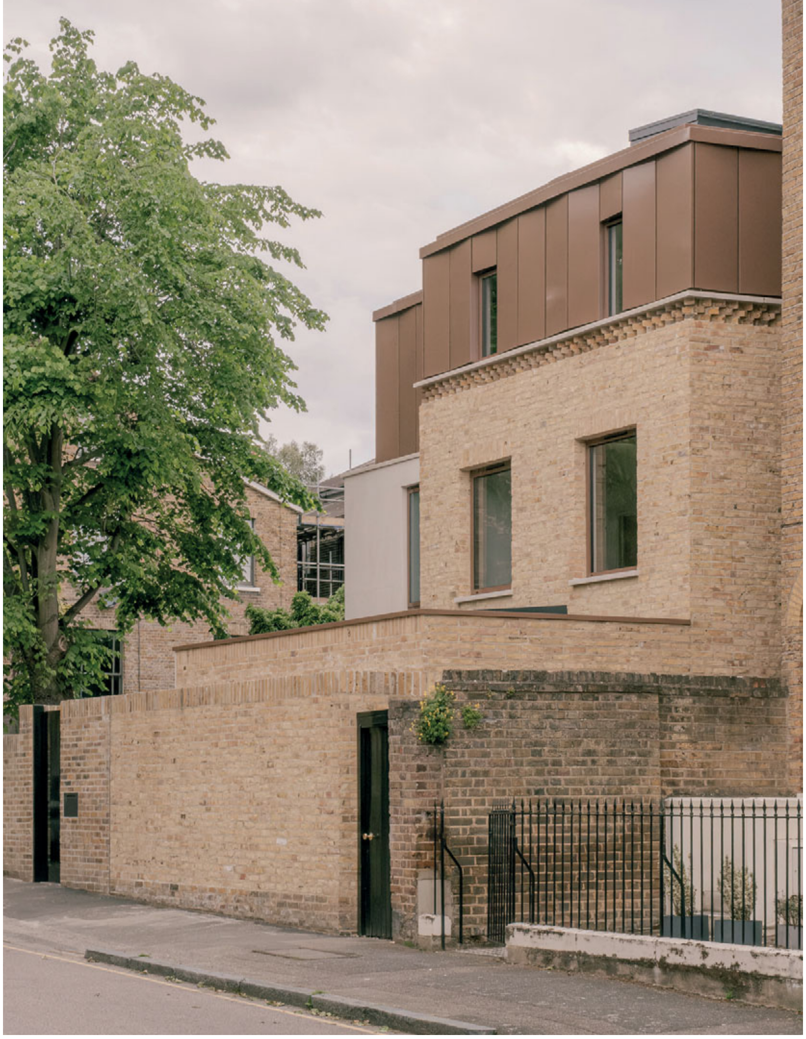


mews houses provide the inspiration for blackheath *new-build*

***Mailen Design** has completed Lee Terrace, a new-build, family home in Blackheath, South East London. The practice has redeveloped a triple-garage infill plot within a historic conservation area into a three-bedroom, free-standing property...*

Inspired by mews houses, the contemporary home is sympathetic to the character and appearance of the surrounding architecture and street scene, which includes several Grade II listed Victorian properties. Its detailed execution fulfils Lewisham and Blackheath councils' ambition to introduce sustainable new construction into the area, setting a benchmark for integrating new architecture across the whole of London.

Referencing the traditional relationship between mews buildings to the end of plots of large listed buildings, Mailen Design's Lee Terrace has a contextual nature. The first and second storeys are recessed, aligning with the front elevations of the adjacent terraced houses. The house's stepped facade consists of London stock brickwork and pre-cast stone, featuring ornamental angled brick detailing that complements the visual language of the area. On top sits the crowning volume, clad in s ubtly undulating aluminium panels with a bronze finish, a sophisticated yet unobtrusive gesture that allows the new home to settle into the architectural context of the area whilst quietly stating its own personality.

An existing garden wall has been extended to conceal the open ground floor and main entrance to the house. From the street, a black timber door opens onto a small front courtyard paved in large ceramic tiles. Expansive glazing stretches across the ground floor elevations, giving view through the interior to the rear garden beyond. Part of the courtyard is sheltered due to the first storey of the house cantilevering outwards, creating a small canopy complete with skylight.

The M
Guide to
Good Bus

> With much of the ground floor composed of glazing, what is outside forms an integral part of the interior experience, natural views of the sky and garden foliage filter in through rooflights and windows, intentionally creating a continuous dialogue with the natural landscape...
>
> *Mailen Design*

During the design process, Mailen Design worked closely with an arboriculturalist to assess and protect the two mature trees near the site, underscoring the studio's commitment to minimising the scheme's environmental impact by prioritising the existing natural landscape. This collaboration influenced key design decisions, including the layout and foundations of the house, to ensure that the trees' root systems remained undisturbed. The front courtyard's design thoughtfully recesses, leaving ample space for the branches of a mature lime tree in the adjoining garden, which backs onto Lee Terrace.

Internally, a series of wonderfully bright living spaces feature a tactile palette of exposed concrete and oak joinery. Entering the home, the stone paving from the courtyard flows inside forming the interior entryway. A large rooflight punctuates the exposed concrete ceiling to draw in natural light from above. Ahead, a wall of oak joinery conceals a bathroom utility room.

A single step leads down into an open plan kitchen, dining and living space where floor to ceiling glazing spanning the rear elevation allows the garden to serve as a backdrop. The dining area sits between the front entrance and a U-shaped kitchen with marble worktops and extensive cabinetry in dark forest green. Exposed concrete continues to run overhead and along sections of wall, creating a cool contrast to the herringbone parquet flooring underfoot, whilst a second long rooflight draws in even more light. With much of the ground floor composed of glazing, what is outside forms an integral part of the interior experience, natural views of the sky and garden foliage filter in through rooflights and windows, intentionally creating a continuous dialogue with the natural landscape.

A large sliding door opens onto a tiered garden where a patio paved in the same ceramic tiles as the courtyard and entryway hugs the rear elevation. A built-in seating area lies beneath a stone wall and between two sets of patio steps, respectively leading up to a larger paved section and a turfed area which encircles a mature poplar tree.

Shielded from overlooking neighbouring properties, the patio feels intimate and private – an attribute not commonly associated with end-of-plot mews-style houses. Designed as a versatile space, the patio offers sanctuary for family life while extending the indoor entertainment area, fostering seamless indoor-outdoor living.

Inside, an oak staircase ascends to the first floor, featuring two bedrooms and family bathroom, the walls transitioning from exposed concrete to white painted plaster. A balustrade of bespoke joinery floats along the stairwell. A second oak staircase detailed with shadow gap skirting leads up to the master bedroom with walk-in wardrobe and en-suite bathroom.

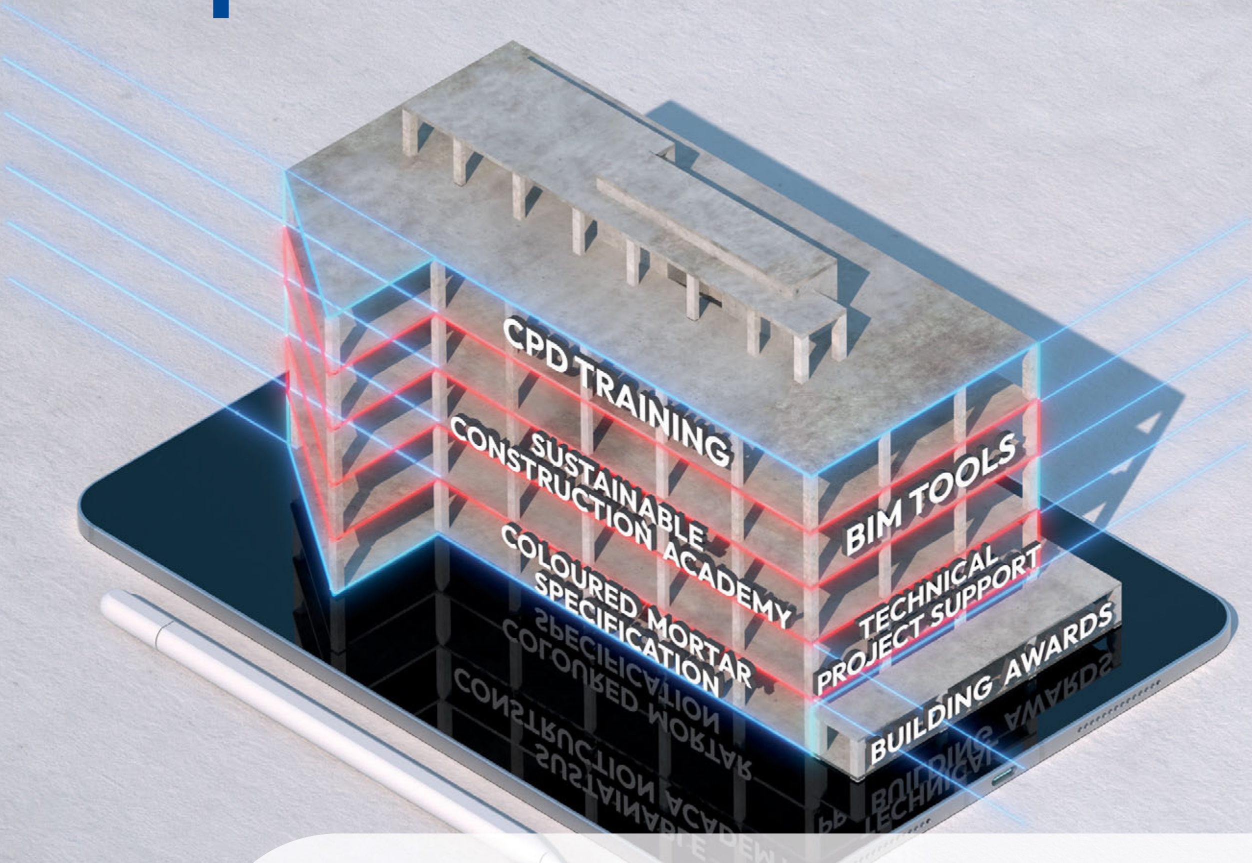
As an avid advocate for integrating sustainability into projects from their inception, Mailen Design's Lee Terrace is a highly efficient new family home that reuses a once-dilapidated brownfield site. Serving as a benchmark for the area, the project exemplifies high-quality, sustainable architecture that aligns with local sustainability goals. An air-source heat pump, directly connected to a ground-floor service cupboard, provides an efficient system for heating the house's water. In addition to high levels of air-tightness and insulation, the home incorporates carefully positioned glazing and efficient ventilation to minimise energy demands on the building.

Lee Terrace is an elegant and warm family home that responds to the historical context of the neighbourhood and wider Blackheath conservation area. Hidden behind the extended garden wall, is a secret chic and sophisticated interior, a composition of raw and organic materials, modern design and an abundance of natural light.

Ben Mailen, Project Architect, Mailen Design said: "Lee Terrace is an example of efficiency and creativity within the challenging conditions of the historic Blackheath conservation area. This new-build family home balances modern functionality with sensitivity to the area's architectural heritage, stringent local planning and townscape requirements, and protects the two mature trees on and adjacent to the site. We have maximised the internal volume quality by designing a layout that maximises usable space and strategically positioning glazing to bring in natural light, creating an airy, light-filled and fluid internal floorspace that feels spacious and connected to the outdoors."

Images: Alex Dormon and Peter Landers

The one place you need for building inspiration.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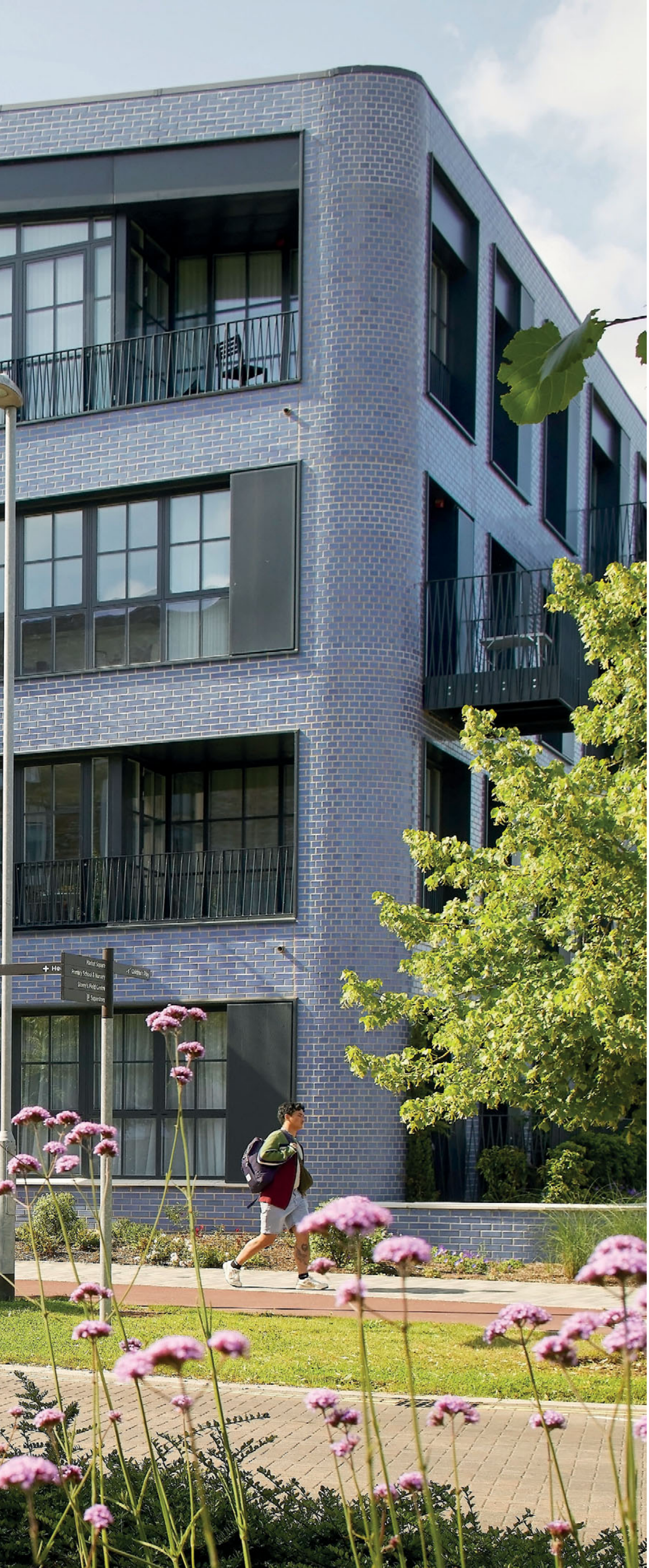
Rubicon offers a vision for the future of high-density, low-rise living, by interweaving cycling, homeworking, community spaces and landscapes
Photographer credit: Hufton + Crow

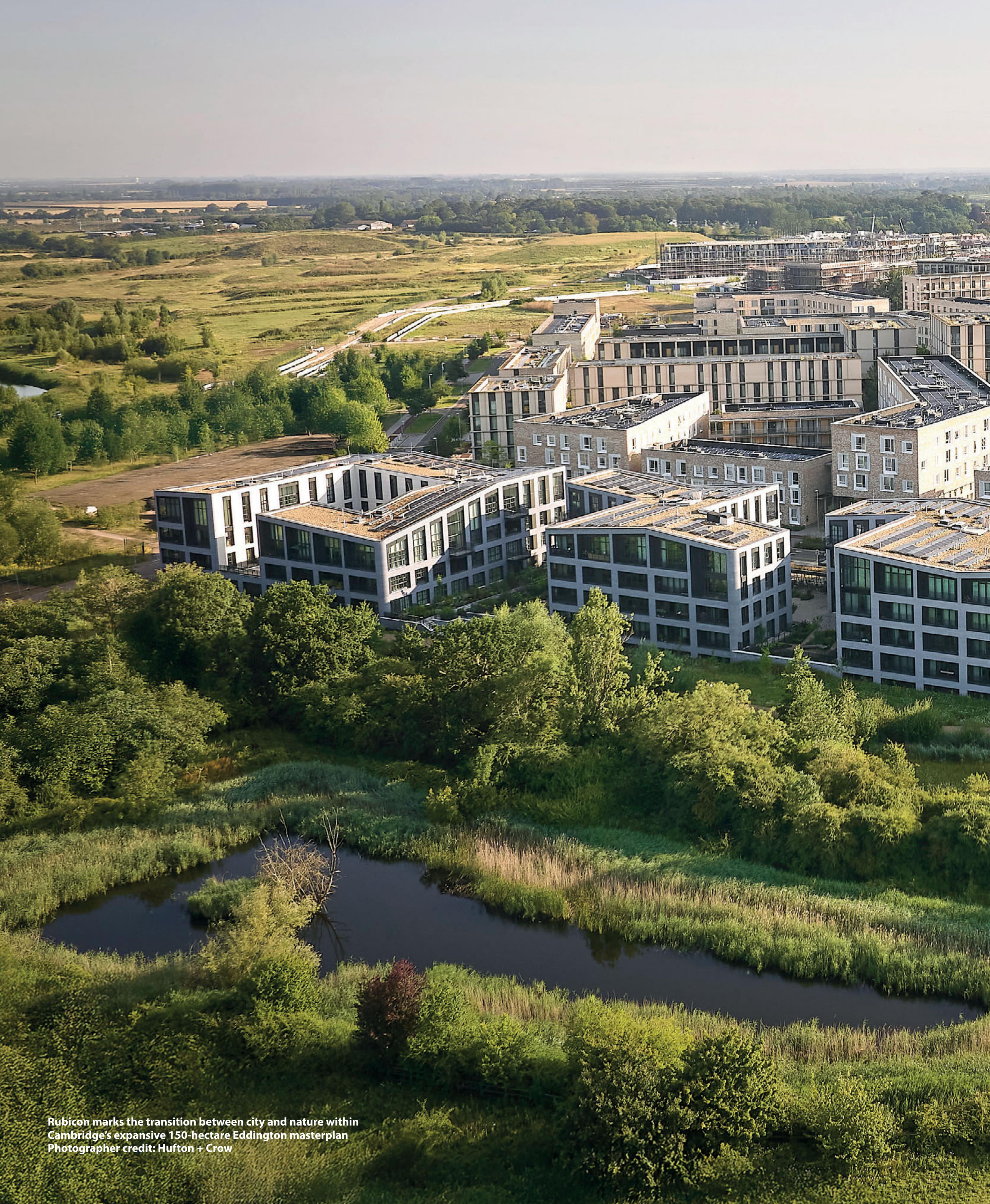


a new model for sustainable living in *cambridge*

Rubicon introduces a new typology rooted in cycle-centred mobility, serving as a welcoming gateway and defining the urban edge of the 150-hectare Eddington master plan in northwest Cambridge. This net zero development, designed by ***Alison Brooks Architects*** *for the University of Cambridge and The Hill Group, redefines community living by merging warehouse loft-typologies with the collegiate court. Incorporating co-working spaces, sunlit courtyards and cycle-friendly apartments, the scheme acts as the urban threshold to the wetlands beyond...*

The development offers 186 homes over 0.74 hectares, 35% of which are dedicated to university and key-worker housing, in five tessellating S- and L-shaped buildings. Their distinctive architectural language, featuring glazed bricks, curved corners and undulating roofs, conveys permanence and versatility. Between the buildings, urban-facing courtyards connect with ones that look out over the landscape to 'stitch' these two contexts together. Drawing upon 19th century warehouse and mill typologies traditionally found bordering rural settings, Rubicon evokes a sense of historical continuity with its location, clearly defining the urban edge.

A sculptural roofline that rises and falls softly unites the separate forms, echoing the Cambridgeshire landscape. The western edge of the site features a courtyard block inspired by Cambridge's famed colleges. The glazed brick material palette of shimmering hues, from tranquil green and yellow to light blue, azure and silvery grey,



Rubicon marks the transition between city and nature within Cambridge's expansive 150-hectare Eddington masterplan
Photographer credit: Hufton + Crow

> **We have reimagined how people can live, work and connect with one another as a community of shared interests...**
>
> *Alison Brooks*

gives each façade a unique identity. Deeply recessed south-facing balconies provide solar shading while offering unobstructed views.

The ground floor is a catalyst for community, with semi-public co-working foyers in each block encouraging spontaneous exchanges among residents, including academics, professionals, university workers, students and retirees. These robust 'third spaces' create hubs of activity where residents host regular social gatherings.

Rubicon sets a new UK benchmark in residential sustainability as a zero-carbon operational energy development, achieving Code for Sustainable Homes (CfSH) Level 5, with 82% of the building's operational energy generated on-site. A 'fabric-first' approach emphasizes low U-values and air permeability, complemented by a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) District Heating System and efficient Mechanical Heat Recovery Ventilation (MHVR) systems to minimise energy demand.

Rubicon is a zero-carbon development, both in operational CO_2 emissions and site-wide sustainable infrastructure. It employs a 'fabric first' approach with 300mm mineral wool insulation in walls and a comprehensive PV roof system, achieving U-values of $0.12W/m^2K$. The landscape design adheres to Design Code 3.78.

Key features include rain gardens for water collection and infiltration, with harvested rainwater treated at the Eddington water treatment plant and reused in individual apartments via separate grey water systems. The development meets Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, with triple-glazed windows and minimized cold bridging for optimal energy efficiency. A district heating system and increased dual aspect flats enhance cross ventilation.

Photographer credit: Hufton + Crow

Semi-public co-working foyers in each block encourage spontaneous exchanges
Photographer credit: Hufton + Crow

Acoustic analysis led to the inclusion of attenuated ventilation louvres to prevent overheating while minimizing noise.

Rubicon's design incorporates high-density, low-rise buildings with co-working spaces and green courtyards planted with native species. The development emphasizes cycling, providing twice the required cycle spaces, a bicycle washing area using grey water, and easy access for bicycles throughout the complex.

Passive environmental measures include:

- S-shaped buildings creating sheltered courtyards while allowing permeability to a nearby reservoir.
- Massing designed for optimal dual aspect units and a predominantly North-South orientation.
- Full-length balconies and deep window reveals for shading, especially on the East and West facades.
- Reduced glazing on Northern, Eastern, and Western facades to minimize solar gains.
- Low U-value construction ($0.1W/m^2K$ for floors, walls, and roofs, $0.89W/m^2K$ for windows) and low air permeability rate of $3m^3/hm^2$ (@50Pa).
- Reduced thermal bridging, circulation cores, and smoke shafts.

Rubicon also embraces the local cycling culture, offering extensive cycling facilities. The courtyards feature bike pavilions at entrances, and ample cycle storage is available in the basement. The design includes thoughtful features like spacious lift cars, wide corridors, passing bays, and in-apartment cycle storage. Secure cycle parking is provided in the basement, with additional sheltered racks at entrance courts for visitors.

Waste reduction was a priority during construction, with a communal underground bin waste collection system implemented throughout Eddington. This system encourages recycling by providing convenient collection points near apartments, freeing up space in communal foyers and creating an active, engaging street front.

Alison Brooks, Principal at Alison Brooks Architects said: "More than just a housing project, Rubicon offers a vision for the future of high-density, low-rise living, by interweaving cycling, home-working, community spaces and landscapes. We have reimagined how people can live, work and connect with one another as a community of shared interests." -

Tom Hill, Managing Director at The Hill Group commented: "Rubicon sets the standard in sustainable living, using innovative, seamlessly integrated methods to minimise environmental impact. Key features include a development-wide rainwater harvesting system and underground waste management."

It's Not Just About Looks!

Garador, Britain's leading garage door manufacturer, highlights how modern technology is transforming garage doors beyond aesthetics...

Striking designs, premium materials, and exceptional functionality are all key elements of a modern garage door. However, there is another crucial factor to consider when choosing the right door – cutting-edge technology.

"We're not just talking about opening mechanisms," says Jon Watson, Managing Director of Garador. "Of course, Garador was among the first to introduce smart garage doors that can be fully operated via mobile devices and home hubs. But today's technology extends far beyond that."

Innovative Protective Materials

Garador has introduced the exclusive Durabelt system for its popular GaraGlide roller garage doors. This advanced feature incorporates a microcellular polyurethane elastomer belt designed to minimize marks and scratches on the curtain surface, ensuring smooth operation and prolonged durability.

"It may seem like a small detail, but it makes a significant difference in maintaining the door's pristine look and performance over time," says Jon.

Uncompromising Security

Garador offers some of the most secure garage doors available for UK homes. As one of the first manufacturers to achieve full Secured by Design accreditation, Garador prioritises security at every level. Its Guardian range of steel up-and-over doors includes enhanced reinforcement locks, anti-snap cylinders, high-security braces, and additional steel plates to guard against forced entry. These features make Garador's range one of the most secure on the market.

Superior Insulation

In today's energy-conscious world, insulation plays a vital role. A well-insulated garage not only keeps stored items warm and dry but can also contribute to reduced household heating costs. Garador's premium sectional garage doors feature 42mm thick double-skin steel sections filled with 100% CFC-free PU rigid foam, achieving outstanding insulation with U-values as low as 1.30 W/m^{2}K.

"It's all about evolving with the times," Jon adds. "Our Somerset factory benefits enormously from the latest technology and so do our next-generation garage doors."

With striking designs, a wide range of materials, and cutting-edge technology, Garador is set to remain a leader in the industry for years to come.

JH3

For more information about Garador's extensive range of garage doors contact their friendly advisors at ***01935 443 700*** *or visit* ***www.garador.co.uk***

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Building safety, accessibility and future-proofing top of the agenda at *LIFTEX 2025*

The modernisation of existing lifts, evacuation requirements and fire safety regulations are among the key topics to be discussed in the free seminar programme at this year's ***LIFTEX 2025*** *(11-12 June 2025, ExCeL, London)...*

LIFTEX 2025, the UK's premier exhibition for lift, escalator and access products, arrives at the perfect time to address these challenges. "This year's programme reflects the transformative regulatory landscape our industry faces," says Oliver Greening, LIFTEX 2025 Show Director. "From modernisation of ageing lift stock to evacuation protocols, we're bringing together the leading voices who are actively shaping these conversations."

The Building Safety Act is driving a renewed focus on how every stakeholder in the supply chain can demonstrate their organisational capability. A critical aspect of this involves managing the competence of individuals in field roles. Headlining the programme, Nick Mellor will explore strategies for competence management and showcase recent work on industry guidance.

LEIA Technical Manager Micky Grover-White will cover the critical revision of BS 5655-11 – the code of practice for undertaking modifications to existing lifts. With the reality that most lifts were installed over two decades ago to now outdated safety parameters, this session will unpack the complex challenges of bringing legacy systems in line with contemporary standards.

Rachel Smalley, Head of Inclusive Design at Jacobs, will explore the increasingly vital role of evacuation lifts in modern building design. Drawing on her extensive experience chairing the BS 8300 committee on accessible design and her work on policy, Smalley will challenge attendees to reconsider evacuation lifts not merely as regulatory compliance but as essential infrastructure for truly inclusive buildings.

"Evacuation planning can't be one-size-fits-all," notes Greening. "Rachel's session will explore how different user groups benefit from evacuation lifts and how these systems future-proof our buildings."

Complementing these sessions, Ian McGregor of LEIA QTC will demystify the Fire Safety (England) Regulations and their implications for responsible persons. This practical session connects directly to the upcoming revision of LEIA LM01 maintenance requirements, providing actionable guidance for operators.

Alongside the seminar programme is an exhibition featuring over 100 UK and international exhibitors including contractors, service companies, component suppliers and organisations from support services.

For more information, or to register for free for LIFTEX 2025, please visit **www.liftexshow.com**

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Mermet coated fibreglass fabrics are suitable for solar shading, sound control and the provision of tensile structures such as canopies, stretched ceilings and wall panels. Ideal for both internal and external use, Mermet fabrics are ideal for digital printing; meaning pictures, corporate logos and such can be printed onto the fabric before it made into the final product this could be a blind, stretched ceiling or anything else your imagination suggests. Mermet fabrics also meet BS476, Part 6, Class 0 fire rating making them particularly suitable for use in schools, hospitals or other public areas and buildings.

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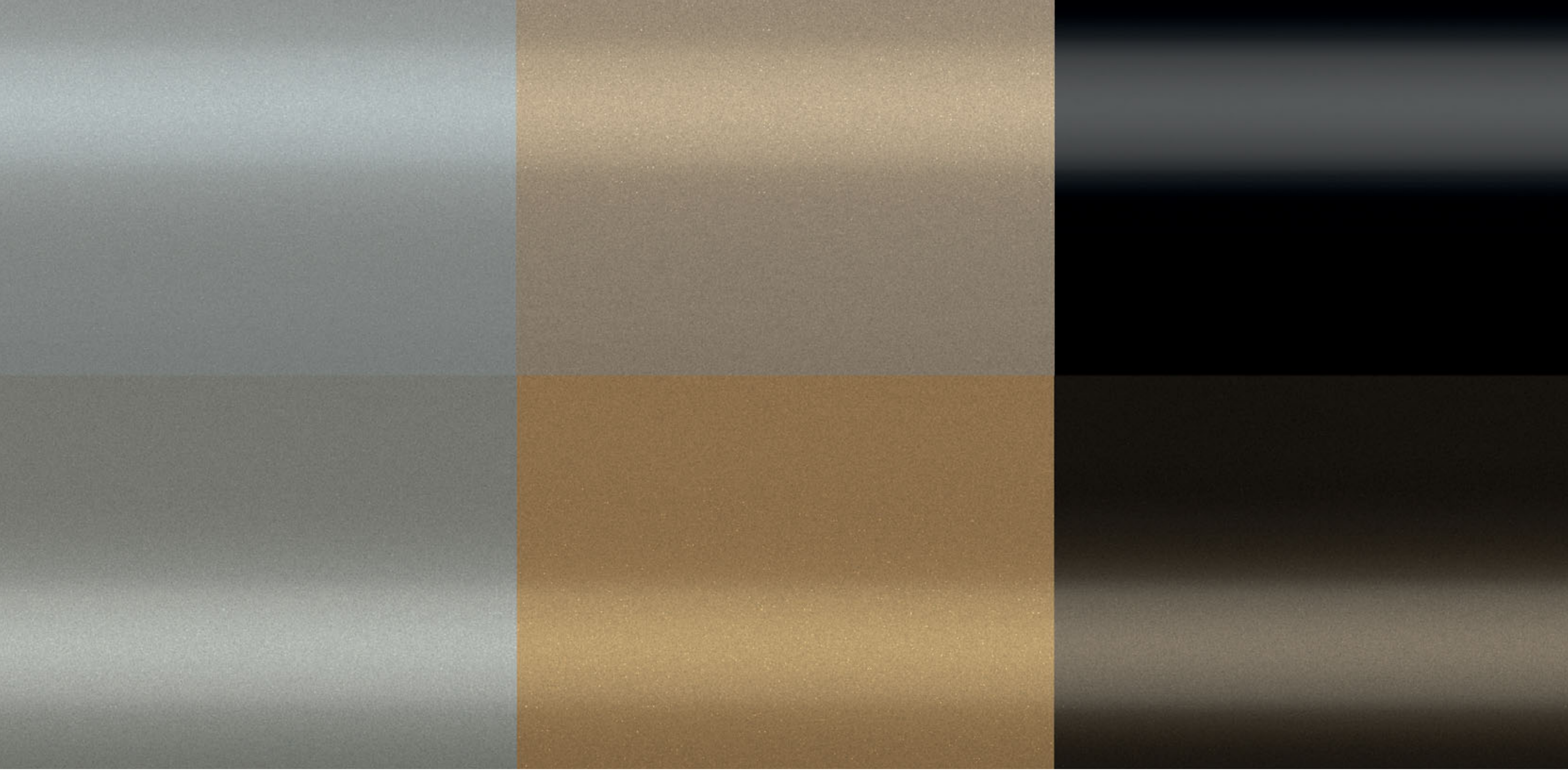

Beyond black:

Why it’s time to challenge a predictable palette

Famously, pioneering US car manufacturer Henry Ford said of his iconic Model T: “Any customer can have a car painted any colour that he wants so long as it is black.” And for the next decade, he was as good as his word. Black was the cheapest colour, and the production line didn’t need to stop for a splash of brightly hued paint.

Eventually, though, consumer demand dictated a change of heart, and Ford was forced to offer his Model Ts in green, maroon and grey. Ironically, the top two most popular car colours today are white and black, but at least now there is a choice.

For decades, steel-framed windows and doors have been a popular choice for architects keen to harness their slim sightlines, strength and classic aesthetic. While always admired for elegance, they have also been stuck in a predictable palette of black and anthracite grey. Yet, like the Model T, this conservatism is changing rapidly. A new era embraces the full potential of colour.

Advancements in finishing technology give architects freedom to break away from the traditional monochrome look. Crittall Windows, synonymous with steel fenestration since 1849, is leading the way with an expanded range of powder-coated finishes. Crittall pioneered the powder coating of steel windows and doors and has been an AkzoNobel-approved applicator since 1976. Working with the Dutch multinational, they have developed collections featuring natural metal effects, premium metallic finishes and ultra-matte coatings, each offering new creative possibilities.

These finishes go beyond adding colour; they transform how steel interacts with its surroundings. A copper finish, for example, creates warm, shifting reflections throughout the day, while ultra-matte coatings absorb light for a striking, contemporary effect.

While black remains a staple for steel windows and doors, a broader palette allows architects more freedom to shape a space’s personality. Metallic tones bring refinement. Bronze and brass add warmth and heritage, while silver and nickel create a sleek, modern edge. Whether it is the industrial charm of weathered iron or the luxury of burnished brass, these new finishes lift a project from ‘standard’ to ‘unique’.

Crucially, embracing colour does not mean compromising durability. The latest powder coatings are engineered for longevity, resisting weathering while maintaining vibrancy. In addition, with full control of its manufacturing process, Crittall ensures every finish meets the highest standards of quality and resilience.

Iconic building design doesn’t come from ‘predictable’. The world’s most striking architecture results from pushing boundaries. Moving beyond black takes confidence, but for those who dare, the rewards are significant. Thoughtfully chosen finishes set a building apart, focusing on colour and texture rather than extravagant design. As architectural trends evolve, innovation is key. Crittall’s expanded range of steel finishes offers architects a powerful tool to bring personality, individuality and nuance to their projects. The future of steel fenestration is no longer confined to black. Now is the time to be bold, be creative and embrace the full spectrum of possibility.

www.crittall-windows.co.uk

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building sustainable homes *with natural insulation*

***Neil Turner,** (UK) Technical Manager at Ecological Building Systems explains why natural insulation is becoming an essential part of modern homes...*

Natural insulation materials originate from renewable resources, such as wood fibres, hemp, sheep wool and jute. They have a significantly lower carbon footprint and a higher sequestered biogenic carbon content than conventional insulation options like foam or mineral wool.

The growing demand for low-carbon building materials is driving increased interest in natural fibre insulation as an alternative to conventional options, such as mineral wool, polystyrene (EPS & XPS) rigid polyurethane (PUR/PIR) and phenolic foam.

Natural insulation materials offer several performance benefits, for example, low thermal diffusivity (over-heat reduction in summer), airborne acoustic noise reduction and moisture diffusion openness (breathability).

In addition, natural insulation materials, such as Gutex Multitherm, which is made from recycled wood chips, have a very low cradle to end of life Global Warming Potential (GWP) of 93.36kg CO2 equivalent/m^3 (1). Wood fibre insulation can also often be recycled at the end of life and when these impacts are considered (Section D of the life cycle assessment), then it has a better than carbon zero GWP rating of -91.14kg CO2 equivalents/m^3 (1).

Thermal regulation

The thermal mass and humidity-regulating properties of natural insulation are essential in maintaining comfortable indoor temperatures and reducing the risk of moisture-related issues in buildings.

Compared to many other insulation materials, natural fibre insulation has a high specific heat capacity (2). This, combined with its relatively high density and reasonable thermal conductivity, allows the absorption and storage of significant amounts of thermal energy. The thermal mass can play a crucial role in mitigating overheating during the summer months, providing a more stable and comfortable indoor environment.

By opting for an insulation material with natural thermal energy storage capabilities, homeowners can enjoy a consistently high level of comfort throughout the year. This material significantly reduces heat loss during the winter, and limits heat gain during the summer, leading to improved energy efficiency and lower energy bills. In addition, natural insulation materials also help with acoustics by absorbing sound waves, which reduces the transmission of noise between different spaces within a building.

Breathability

Two of the main characteristics of natural insulation materials are their breathability and high moisture sorption/desorption properties. The breathability of the materials provides greater flexibility in building design as there is no need for highly moisture vapour resistant barriers. It also prevents the build-up of moisture within the building envelope, reducing the risk of interstitial condensation, mould, rot and other related problems.

In addition to being moisture vapour diffusion open, natural fibre insulation products tend to have a high degree of hygroscopicity. They allow moisture vapour to be absorbed, distributed, stored and then harmlessly released with changing indoor and outdoor climate conditions. The absorption and release of moisture by the insulation also helps regulate temperature variations, providing a more comfortable space.

In terms of design, this breathability allows for greater design flexibility as there is no need to use high vapour resistant Vapour Control Layers throughout the building.

In historic renovations or when upgrading the thermal performance of solid masonry walls, the use of natural insulation helps prevent issues related to moisture, condensation and mould. These materials are especially effective when used with lime-based mortar products, preserving the breathability throughout the wall structure.

For modern builds, including Passive House projects, natural insulation materials help buildings to achieve a high level of energy efficiency while maintaining a healthy indoor environment and reducing the building's overall carbon footprint. For that reason, a growing number of Passive House constructions use natural wood fibre boards and airtight racking systems to ensure optimal thermal performance and effective moisture management within the building.

The installation process for natural insulation is similar to that of other insulation products and does not require specialised protective gear or complex techniques, reducing health and safety issues on site. Airtightness can be achieved by sealing joints with appropriate tapes and sealants. Insulation suppliers can offer guidance on this aspect of the installation.

A sustainable insulation solution

Natural insulation materials provide significant long-term advantages, including improved energy efficiency and enhanced indoor comfort. Architects and builders should collaborate with their clients to fully explore these benefits. It is important to consider not only the immediate impact, but also the potential cost savings and performance improvements over the lifetime of the building.

When choosing insulation materials, it is important to take into account many factors such as heat capacity, breathability, thermal performance, acoustics and environmental impact.

The growing demand for more sustainable insulation materials has led to the development of a wide range of options, making it possible to find suitable materials for most applications.

JH200

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(1) EPD – GTX-20200178-1BC1-EN: Gutex Multitherm EPD (ISO 14025 and EN15804 +A1
(2) EN10456

Second national conference to focus on 'happy communities'

Architects, urban planners, and design aficionados from the UK's public and private sectors are invited to a conference aimed at establishing great building design delivery and placemaking in challenging times.

The Make it Happen conference this year will focus on 'happy communities' – and the way mixed use schemes can be better delivered in cities. The event is organised by partners Urban Design Group (UDG), the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), the Landscape Institute, Leicester City Council and Nottingham City Council.

The conference aims to celebrate triumphs and share best practice within the realm of architecture and urban planning.

The event takes place on 7 May 2025, upstairs at Cleaver & Wake at The Island Quarter, Nottingham – a £1.3bn 36-acre regeneration site that is central to the city's sustainable growth and an award-winning piece of architecture.

Dr Laura Alvarez, senior principal urban design and conservation officer at Nottingham City Council and author of A Beginner's Guide to Urban Design and Development: The ABC of Quality, Sustainable Design established the first conference in 2024 and said: "After the successful first event last year, we are returning in 2025 to focus on housing, with a special emphasis on creating happy communities through effective planning and development. We will explore the benefits of mixed-use development in cities, aiming to make them more desirable places to live for families and community-driven residents. Additionally, we will discuss the possibilities of re-purposing and densification to craft more inclusive residential spaces.

Tickets are £35 with reductions for public sector delegates. To book, visit ***www.rtpi.org.uk/events/2025/may/the-make-it-happen-east-midlands-conference-2025***

Poets in motion: Planning application submitted for new Harrow neighbourhood

The development will transform the former council headquarters on Station Road providing over 1,000 thoughtfully designed apartments, and creating a new thriving, sustainable neighbourhood with generous public space and potential for a new health centre. Building on the strength of existing communities, the partnership between the London Borough of Harrow and Wates Residential will also help to deliver much needed affordable homes in the heart of Harrow.

The first phase of the project will deliver more than 100 new affordable homes, including council owned four bedroom townhouses, and a significant number of Build to Rent properties through a mix of studios, one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments. All of the apartments will benefit from private outdoor space and community gardens. Future phases will complement the initial delivery with around 500 additional homes, supported by over 1,000m^2 of flexible commercial, community and amenity spaces.

The design of these homes will blend seamlessly with the surrounding area, with building heights stepping down towards existing streets and creating generous new open spaces including a brand-new green flag park. The design captures the site's civic heritage, with the new architecture referencing design found in the old civic centre.

Cllr Marilyn Ashton, Deputy Leader of the London Borough of Harrow, Planning & Regeneration Portfolio Holder, said: "Poets' Corner represents a major step forward in our vision for a revitalised Harrow. This development will provide much-needed genuinely affordable homes, beautiful green spaces, and improved local infrastructure to benefit current and future residents".

2025 Spring Statement reactions

Mike Robinson, Chief Executive of British Safety Council:
"The Chancellor has painted a positive picture of growth that is welcome amid recent economic instability – for employers and employees alike.

"While this wasn't intended to be a budget in a traditional sense, we welcome the announcement that day-to-day spending across Government, has been protected; particularly when this comes to arms length bodies like the Health and Safety Executive and the Building Safety Regulator.

"The Chancellor re-iterated the Government's mission of national renewal, which both fuels and is fuelled by growth. This has seen significant reforms to England's planning regime which will help to unlock growth, and is supported by £600m to train, re-train, and upskill the next generation of our construction workforce."

Russell Smith, Managing Director of Ecofurb:
"It's good to see planning reforms will bring housebuilding to its highest level in 40 years, including new affordable housing – but the UK's biggest climate and cost-of-living opportunity lies in the homes we already live in. Over 80% of homes we'll use in 2050 have already been built. Without targeted retrofit support, millions of homeowners are left out in the cold."

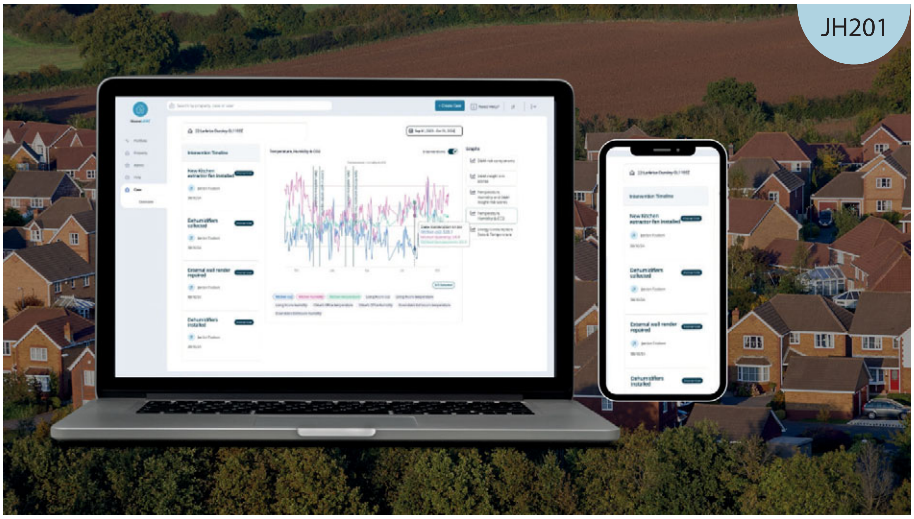
Lawrence Turner, Director at Boyer:
"The Chancellor's announcement contained some good news for the planning and development sector.

"The OBR's estimation is that the changes to the NPPF are set to have the biggest positive growth effect in the forecast, with no fiscal cost. The increase in housing supply alone, it predicts, will increase GDP by 0.2% by 2029-30, adding £6.8bn to the economy.

"Of course these figures are nothing more than projections: they require a series of 'moving parts' to be put into place very carefully before the financial (and other) benefits are achieved. I, together with my colleagues in LRG's New Homes division, have stated many times that increased housing delivery requires more than planning consents."

case management solution to support landlords in maintaining safe and *compliant homes*

***Aico,** the European market leader in home life safety, announced the launch of its innovative HomeLINK Case Management (HCM) system in November 2024. This advanced tool is designed to address landlords' biggest challenges in maintaining safe, compliant homes...*


JH201

HCM provides landlords with a comprehensive, intuitive solution to manage issues like damp and mould. In future updates, plans are to expand into fire and CO compliance and decarbonisation.

HomeLINK is a leading technology in smart property management solutions, dedicated to helping landlords create healthier, safer living environments through advanced technology and data-driven insights. HomeLINK solutions are trusted by landlords across the UK, supporting their efforts to stay compliant, enhance tenant satisfaction, and achieve sustainability goals.

Informed by feedback from customers and recent industry legislation, Aico created HCM to help property managers meet compliance requirements and streamline complex processes. This launch is well timed given the increasing regulatory pressures that landlords face to maintain safer, healthier living environments for residents.

Meeting Key Property Management Challenges

HCM's development reflects five big challenges identified from customer insights and feedback following Aico's recent events: 'Building a Safer Future Together' and 'Social Housing Professionals Network Roadshow'. These challenges include identifying and managing cases, analysing data, recording actions and interventions, and communicating with residents—all areas where HCM is set to make a transformative impact.

"HCM is a direct response to the needs and concerns of landlords, delivering a robust solution that makes compliance easier and promotes proactive management and tenant satisfaction," said Chris Jones, Product Director.

Features and Benefits of HomeLINK Case Management

Aico's HMC system helps landlords address each stage of case management with greater ease and effectiveness:

- Identify: HCM uses data insights and resident surveys to quickly detect property problems, enabling timely responses.
- Manage: The system streamlines portfolio management, allowing landlords to create, assign, and track cases. Optional hardware can provide deeper insights.
- Analyse: Landlords gain valuable insights through data visualisations, comparing property conditions and tracking the impact of interventions like insulation upgrades.
- Record: Comprehensive record-keeping ensures transparency, compliance, and detailed audit trails for every case.
- Communicate: Landlords can engage residents through the HomeLINK Resident App, sharing updates, requesting surveys, and tracking changes over time.

Integrated into the HomeLINK portal, HMC ensures seamless management for existing and new customers, providing a unified tool to create consistent compliance, increase tenant experience, and portfolio standards.

"HCM is a transformative tool for landlords, simplifying compliance while boosting tenant satisfaction," said Chris Jones, Product Director.

Jordan Toulson, Product & Success Manager, added, "This is more than a case management tool; it's a proactive solution for the sector's biggest challenges."

For more information, visit **www.aico.co.uk**

JH202

achieve flawless flooring with Fassa Bortolo SM 485 *self levelling compound*

When it comes to creating smooth, level surfaces, precision and performance are essential. Fassa Bortolo's SM 485 self-levelling compound delivers both, setting the standard for high-quality flooring preparation. Designed for professional use, SM 485 combines advanced formulation with easy application, ensuring a perfectly level substrate, that enhances the durability and aesthetic of any flooring system.

SM 485 is a cement-based, fast-setting, self-levelling compound, ideal for both new construction and renovation projects. With thicknesses between 3 to 30mm, its exceptional flow properties allow it to spread evenly and self-smooth, eliminating surface imperfections and providing a flawless finish. Suitable for interior use, SM 485 can be applied over concrete, screeds, and existing ceramic tiles, making it a versatile solution for a wide range of substrates. Its high mechanical strength ensures long-lasting performance, even under heavy foot traffic. SM 485 is particularly suitable for application on underfloor heating and cooling systems, with heat transfer fluid or electric, for indoor residential environments.

One of the standout features of SM 485 is its rapid drying time. Once applied, it achieves walk-on hardness in as little as three hours, significantly reducing downtime and allowing for faster project completion. Its low shrinkage and excellent adhesion properties prevent cracking and delamination, ensuring a stable and secure foundation for various floor coverings, including tiles, wood, vinyl, and carpet.

Application is straightforward, thanks to SM 485's user-friendly consistency. Simply mix with water, pour, and allow the compound to flow naturally across the surface. Its self-levelling properties take over, producing a perfectly even base without the need for extensive manual adjustment. This ease of use, combined with its fast-setting time, makes SM 485 a preferred choice for contractors seeking efficiency without compromising on quality.

Beyond performance, SM 485 reflects Fassa's commitment to sustainable building practices. The formulation incorporates environmentally friendly raw materials and adheres to strict quality standards, ensuring a product that not only performs but also supports eco-conscious construction.

With SM 485, Fassa Bortolo reinforces its reputation for innovation and excellence in the construction industry. Its combination of speed, strength, and versatility makes it the go-to solution for creating flawless floors with minimal effort. Whether for residential, commercial, or industrial projects, SM 485 delivers the perfect foundation for success.

Got a question? We are only a call away. For more information on how our new range of screed products can enhance your projects, please don't hesitate to contact us at **info.fassauk@fassabortolo.com** or **01684 218 305**
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24 *feature* product focus

enhancing fire safety through *accessible alarm controls*

HU201

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarms play a crucial role in early fire detection, however, accessibility to these alarms can pose a challenge for individuals with physical limitations or when alarms are installed in hard-to-reach locations. Low-level Smoke and CO Alarm controls, like Aico's Ei450 RadioLINK Alarm Controller, provide an efficient solution to these challenges.

Low-level control switches provide occupants with accessible control over their alarm systems, enabling them to test, locate, and silence alarms from a convenient location. This feature is particularly beneficial for individuals who may struggle to reach high-mounted alarms or those with limited mobility. Low-level switches offer a simple method to identify the sounding alarm in the event of activation, especially crucial in homes equipped with a combination of Smoke and CO alarms.

While regular alarm testing is essential for ensuring proper functionality, recent data reveals a concerning trend. A study of over 50,000 homes, predominantly social housing, connected using HomeLINK technology, indicated that only half of the properties had alarms linked to low-level control switches. This disparity in accessibility resulted in a striking difference in alarm testing behaviour. Over 60% of homes with low-level control switches tested their alarms at least once within the past year, with this number decreasing dramatically to 24% in homes without these switches.

This data highlights a critical issue: the lack of engagement with fire safety measures among occupants of homes without low-level control switches. The 76% non-testing rate suggests that homeowners may not be adequately aware of the potential dangers posed by fire hazards and may not be taking necessary precautions to protect themselves and their loved ones.

The over 60% testing rate in homes with low-level control switches demonstrates the positive impact of accessible alarm testing. By facilitating regular testing, these switches educate the occupier to recognise the different sound patterns that Fire and CO Alarms make. Encouraging occupants to think about fire safety and prompting them to consider potential fire hazards, develop escape plans and discuss fire safety measures with family members.

Statistics published by the Home Office reveal that most fatal domestic fires occur in properties with either no or non-functioning Smoke Alarms. While occupants in homes with working alarms are undoubtedly safer, the data suggests that those who actively test their alarms will have an even higher level of protection. Regular testing indicates a heightened awareness of fire risks and a willingness to take additional steps for home life safety.

Removing barriers to enable participation and engagement is a common theme in various aspects of life, low-level Smoke and CO alarm control switches represent a successful example of barrier removal in the realm of domestic fire safety. The data overwhelmingly supports the positive impact of these switches on alarm testing.

website: www.aico.co.uk

Why fit a low level control switch?

Over 60% of homes with the Ei450 installed have been tested in the last 12 months, compared to 24% without.

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26 *press room*

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Diffusion
www.diffusion-group.com

Heating and cooling equipment specialist Diffusion is celebrating scooping an award at the CIBSE Building Performance Awards 2024. The company's New Modular Highline 235 Fan Coil Range won the Product or Innovation of the Year – Thermal Comfort category of the awards. The new range has been developed to create the perfect indoor environment, offering modular design – an industry first. With compact dimensions and advanced components that deliver low sound levels, reduced energy consumption and optimal performance, the Highline 235 also has significant sustainability benefits.

The CIBSE Building Performance Awards (BPAs) 2024 recognises the people, products and projects that demonstrate engineering excellence in the built environment. They are the only industry awards that focus on actual, measured performance outcomes, and not just design intent or performance specifications. Winning the Product or Innovation of the Year – Thermal Comfort category of the awards, Diffusion's modularisation of its fan coil product impressed the judges, who said it was 'a practical, well thought through design' that delivered on customer feedback.

The judges added that with thorough research and testing, Diffusion has developed a product that considers whole life costing through the use of TM65 and local sourcing to reduce transport miles.

HU204

GEZE UK
www.geze.co.uk

GEZE UK has demonstrated its commitment to specifiers and architects with the recent appointment of Alex Flokkas who joins the renowned manufacturer of door and window control systems as specification manager covering the south of England.

Alex will focus on collaborating with and supporting architects and end users providing technical solutions for all GEZE products, ensuring compliance with all the latest legislation and regulations. He will be the first point of contact at all stages of the specification process.

With over 20 years in the construction industry with a focus on windows, doors and the glazing sector Alex brings a wealth of knowledge. Previously he has assisted architects, contractors and end users with high-end prestigious projects from residential new builds to Grade I or Grade II listed buildings.

Alex said: "I am excited to join a global and well-established company which is 160 years' strong. GEZE's work culture and values are key to its success and I am thrilled to join a business that mirrors my own values and principles."

Richard Richardson-Derry, national specification manager added: "It's great to have Alex join the team; he has vast experience in the industry. He will be a great asset to the company and an important part of the company's continued growth."

HU206

AKW
sales@akw-ltd.co.uk • www.akw-ltd.co.uk

SILVER 2023 ecovadis Sustainability Rating

Bathroom, kitchen and mobility aid provider, AKW, is now recognised for being in the top 15% of businesses who have participated in the EcoVadis assessment. As recognition for this, AKW has been awarded a silver medal accreditation, reflecting the company's dedication to incorporating environmentally and socially responsible practices into its operations. This accreditation assures AKW customers that they are sourcing products from a sustainable supplier, offering even more peace of mind.

EcoVadis, the world's largest provider of business sustainability ratings, helps companies gain greater insight into their sustainability performance. The medals are awarded based on 21 major sustainability issues and are reviewed annually. Obtaining a silver medal has demonstrated AKW's progress to-date. Working collaboratively with the EcoVadis project team, all AKW departments are actively developing comprehensive improvement programmes, centred on driving continuous advancements in sustainability practices. This will help to move even further up the rankings in the future.

AKW is pleased to have been recognised for exceeding the industry average through environmental, social and value initiatives. In addition, AKW was praised for its policies on: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Child Labour, Forced Labour & Human Trafficking, Career Management & Training and Employee Health & Safety.

HU205

West Fraser
https://uk.westfraser.com/

The team at West Fraser's plant in Cowie, Scotland has donated a total of £13,000 to four local community groups which provide vital care and wellbeing support. Staff at the site handed out this beneficial funding to the groups and charities, which included Strathcarron Hospice and Maggie's Cancer Centre, Forth Valley Sick Kids Hospital and the Start Up Stirling foodbank.

David Connacher, marketing manager at West Fraser Europe, said: "As a major employer to the local area, West Fraser recognises the importance of supporting the local community and the businesses making a huge positive difference within them, in line with our own dedicated commitment to safety and staff wellbeing at West Fraser.

"Not only do we look out for each other on site but staff also wanted to extend this culture to the surrounding local area by supporting these fantastic charities within the community. We are thankful and proud to support these charities in the vital role they play in helping others."

HU207

42 *products* sustainability & energy saving solutions floors, walls, ceilings & acoustics

HU232

Committing to a more sustainable future

Architecture practice **Holmes Miller** has outlined its commitment to a carbon neutral built environment with the publication of a refreshed sustainability charter. In an active response to the climate emergency and both the UK and Scottish government's net zero targets, the practice has updated its original 2020 charter, to reinforce the integration of sustainability principles into every project and service that it offers. Ambitious targets set out in the charter for the coming year include integrating Passivhaus principles into the practice's design approach, regardless of whether a project is targeting Passivhaus certification; using a new embodied carbon assessment tool, developed in-house, across all projects; monitoring in-use energy across all projects, by promoting post occupancy evaluation; and monitoring office energy use to improve performance.

By the book installation for Nottingham Library

HU234

F. Ball products, including dual-purpose Stopgap Fill and Prime thixotropic primer and Stopgap 1200 smoothing compound, have been used to create a large-scale, high-performance flooring finish in the new Nottingham Central Library. Contractors used F. Ball's Stopgap Fill and Prime and Stopgap 1200 smoothing compound to prepare metal raised access panels in all areas, creating a perfectly smooth surface for floorcoverings. Stopgap Fill and Prime is a cement-based primer with a thixotropic consistency, meaning it is easily applied by hand but thickens to a gel-like consistency on standing, allowing it to fill gaps at joints between panels, preventing depressions resulting from a subsequently applied smoothing compound sinking into them while setting. Once the primer had cured, F. Ball's Stopgap 1200 smoothing compound was applied to create a smooth base for the floorcoverings.

HU235

Solid wood floor – a sustainable material choice

Innes Associates has designed dynamic new facilities for Elmgrove Primary School and Nursery in north London. The school has been designed for optimal accessibility to provide a fully integrated space for pupils with physical disabilities. **Junckers** SylvaSport Club solid beech flooring was specified for the large main hall, a safe and durable option ideal for the many different activities the space is used for. A lively-looking floor with colour and structural graining variation, SylvaSport Club is an area elastic floor to EN14904 standard, certified for multipurpose sport use. Junckers' trademark longer staves gives the solid beech floor greater and more consistent strength. The floor contributes to a healthy indoor climate and carries the Danish Indoor Climate label which is recognised by BREEAM.

HU233

Cleaner, greener and affordable homes for Salford

Greenhaus – the largest Passivhaus Classic Certified development in the North West – has completed, bringing 96 highly-sustainable, affordable homes to Chapel Street in Salford. The monthly cost of heating and hot water at Greenhaus is expected to be less than half that of a similar sized new-build home with a gas boiler. Built to Passivhaus Classic certified standard, the leading low-energy design standard, the nine-storey development provides homes which offer high thermal comfort and improved air quality, enabling a healthier living environment as well as lower bills. Bridging a gap in the housing sector for affordable, high specification living, Greenhaus has been delivered by **ECF** – a joint venture between three of the UK's leading regeneration and investment organisations, Homes England, Legal & General, and Muse – alongside Salford housing association, Salix Homes, and supported by Salford City Council. Greenhaus is part of ECF's £1bn, 50-acre Salford Central transformation being delivered in partnership with Salford City Council.

UN recognition for Reynaers' sustainability strategy

Reynaers Aluminium UK has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting environmental initiatives and regulations following the company's global sustainability strategy being recognised by the United Nations.
The UN has awarded Reynaers Group the SDG (Sustainable Development Goal) Pioneer label for its ambitious sustainability work. Through the international certificate, the UN recognises companies that have adopted effective current and long-term sustainability initiatives. Since 2022, all the company's long-term sustainability commitments and goals have been documented in its sustainability strategy Reynaers Act, focusing on reducing carbon emissions in both direct and indirect operations.
Technical Director at Reynaers Aluminium UK, John McComb said: "It's great to see the work Reynaers is doing to support more sustainable practices, and to create systems that will support sustainable building design, recognised at such a high level. With a team of technical experts at the global headquarters and here in the UK, the company is continually working to reach its sustainability goals - and those of the wider UK and global communities."
Reynaers Aluminium UK www.reynaers.co.uk

HU20

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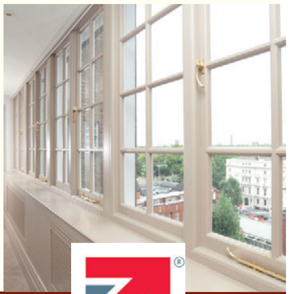

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JH8

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VENT-AXIA CHARITY POWERLEAGUE FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT 2025

RAISED OVER £1500 FOR CANCER RESEARCH UK

Ventilation leader Vent-Axia recently brought together building design professionals for an action-packed Charity Powerleague 5-a-side Football Tournament in Shoreditch, London, in aid of Cancer Research UK. The tournament saw eight teams battle it out, in a five-hour fiercely contested football tournament which raised a total of £1,625 for Cancer Research UK, the company's charity of the year for 2025, thanks to the generosity of everyone who attended.

The event welcomed 70 industry professionals comprising eight teams featuring players from the following companies: Chapmanbdsp, XCO2, WSP, WP3, Etch Associates, Cudd Bentley, Bryden Wood, and lastly Vent-Axia. The tournament showcased impressive skill and sportsmanship, with an intense series of matches culminating in a nail-biting final between Cudd Bentley and XCO2, with Cudd Bentley finally lifting the trophy. Meanwhile, Chapmanbdsp secured the Plate after a hard-fought match against runners-up Vent-Axia. Every player taking part generously donated to Cancer Research UK.

Shaan Patel, Cudd Bentley's team captain said: "We were thrilled to win the tournament. It was a fantastic day, bringing together industry colleagues in a fun and competitive setting while raising money for Cancer Research UK, such an important cause. A huge thank you to Vent-Axia for organising this brilliant event."

Alongside the on-pitch action, Vent-Axia ran a charity auction, featuring a raft of prizes to further support Cancer Research UK. Among the standout items were VIP tickets to Brands Hatch for the British GT Championships, offering an exclusive SRO Club experience including gourmet hospitality and behind-the-scenes access. Meanwhile, football fans had a chance to bid for a Premium Matchday Experience at Tottenham offering unlimited food, a complimentary half-time bar, and premium lounge access.

Also, up for grabs was the Vent-Axia PureAir Room 500X air purifier with CodiKoat, a cutting-edge seven-stage air purification system designed to improve indoor air quality at home or in the workplace.

JH204

The Rumford Club

https://therumfordclub.co.uk/

EurIng Professor Dave Cooper MBE, CEO of LECS UK is taking office as chair of The Rumford Club. The social dining and debating club, that attracts consultants, contractors, manufacturers, educators, researchers and many more across the engineering and construction sectors, to come together to discuss and debate key industry topics alongside a keynote speaker, was first established in 1947.

Cooper takes over from Derek Allen, who chaired the Club for the 2024-2025 term. The next Club season starts in October 2025 with a programme of keynote speakers for the year. The calendar of events, and details on how to become a member are available on the Club's website. Cooper is keen to encourage new members to join.

Dave Cooper said: "I have been a member of the Rumford Club for over 10 years, and have enjoyed each dinner and keynote speaker – always coming away with new perspectives and knowledge. It's a privilege to chair the Club that has been part of my own life-long learning journey, and I would like to encourage new member applications from across the board.

"I thank our out-going chair, Derek Allen, for his incredible term at the helm and I hope to continue the Rumford tradition of education, knowledge sharing, debate and friendship among professionals in this rapidly innovating sector."

The Rumford Club's next meeting is October 16, 2025 and welcomes Ruth Carter, CEO and Anastasia Mylona, Technical Director, of CIBSE as keynote speakers. Details on how to become a member of the Club can be found on the club's website.

Dave Cooper is a distinguished engineer with over 40 years of experience in the lift and escalator industry. His contributions to the industry were recognised with an MBE in 2023, further cementing his legacy as a leader in the field.

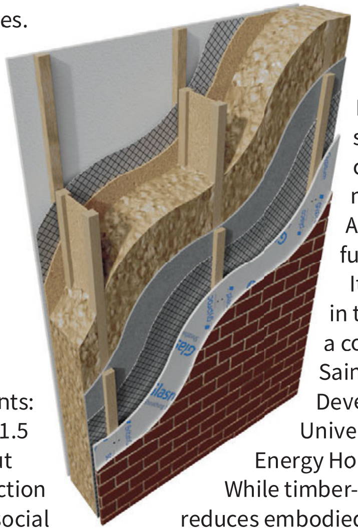
Dave began his career with the British Railways Board before joining KONE, and subsequently Royal Insurance UK.

JH205

Breakthrough offsite solution tackles housebuilding challenges

EnveoVent is a breakthrough solution from **Saint-Gobain** bringing together five of its brands in the first fully-tested through-the-wall system from a single manufacturer.

The ventilated and insulated sustainable external wall includes internal plasterboard, closed timber frame structural panel and lightweight external façade, with a choice of internal and external finishes.



Improving access to modern methods of construction (MMC) for social housing providers and small and regional housebuilders and contractors, the system is purchased in a single transaction, via a single point of contact, with a single warranty.

Saint-Gobain UK & Ireland CEO Mike Chaldecott comments: “The UK has a target to build 1.5 million homes in five years but also has a significant construction skills gap. To help tackle the social housing crisis and increase workforce capacity, we must innovate – and EnveoVent plays a crucial role in this”.

Manufactured offsite, the panels cut the time to construct a wind-and-water-tight shell from 12-plus weeks for a traditional build to as little as six days.

Piloted by Midland Heart housing association in a new development of 12 homes in Birmingham, EnveoVent was the only solution where the homes could be built in time to meet the Homes England Affordable Housing Grant funding deadline.

It was trialled and tested in the eHome2 project – a collaboration between Saint-Gobain and Barratt Developments in the University of Salford’s Energy House 2.0.

While timber-frame construction reduces embodied carbon by around 20% compared to masonry[1], EnveoVent also exceeds the upcoming Future Homes Standard for thermal performance at 0.13-0.16 W/m²K, supporting the net zero transition.

JH206

The sector needs innovative solutions in order to meet housing demand and new regulatory requirements, and high-quality, tested, sustainable MMC solutions are the key.

www.saint-gobain.co.uk/enveovent

[1] *By substituting masonry for timber frame, the embodied carbon emissions reduction for each building constructed is around 20%. Committee on Climate Change – BioComposites Centre Report.*

From rust to resilience

JH9

Restoration of 170-year-old ironwork on a heritage property was achieved with ease by a Devon decorating company, thanks to its discovery of Ferrozinc from **HMG Paints**.

Dart Decorators were tasked with a complete makeover of the Grade II listed townhouse at Ashburton and turned to Rabart Decorators Merchants for advice on how to tackle the guttering and other ironwork.

“They asked for advice on the external decoration as it was in such a poor state,” says Rabart’s area sales manager for Devon Peter Bird. “As well as advising on window, render repairs and external coatings we were able to introduce the contractor to the system of HMG specialist products best suited to tackling the ironwork.”

“On the guttering there was 170 years-worth of paint to be stripped back plus some rusting” explains Dart Decorators’ Oliver Price. Rather than a costly stripping or blasting process the Rabart team recommended to treat the rust with HMG’s Ferrozinc followed by BDX Primer, then a finish with two coats of C71 Speedline.

Ferrozinc rust converter is ideal for situations where it is not possible or practical to blast clean metal substrates such as restorations on historic properties.

Ferrozinc’s primary advantage lies in its straightforward application. After removing loose debris and failed coatings, a simple scraping and wire brushing to eliminate loose rust prepares the surface. Applying a thin coat of Ferrozinc to the affected areas completes the process and a white-to-black colour change confirms Ferrozinc’s rust neutralisation.

The guttering was finished in a shade of pearl which was colour matched by Rabart to match the rest of the restored facades.

The HMG system is fast becoming a go-to for decorators and professionals tasked with this type of work. After a thorough cleaning of loose material Ferrozinc can be applied to all signs of rust.

The product goes on white and turns black to indicate that the rust patches have been neutralised.

Ferrozinc is then overcoated with BDX Primer, a high-build, anti-corrosive coating and followed by C71 Speedline, a synthetic alkyd enamel which provides a tough finish.

shop.hmgpaint.com

New Strata Ceramic Worksurfaces Collection

PWS Worksurfaces is excited to launch its Strata Ceramic Collection, a curated collection of six high-quality, Italian-made ceramic surfaces, crafted to deliver both style and performance and elevate kitchen spaces. Engineered with cutting-edge technology and state-of-the-art print techniques, these ultra-fine, smooth surfaces offer a matte finish whilst blending unparalleled durability with trending colourways and veining structures which replicate the finest natural stone found across the globe.

Crafted from high-performance ceramics, the new Strata Ceramic Collection is durable, resistant to scratches and stains, heatproof, non-porous and easy to clean.

The Arabescato Corchia Strata Ceramic surface features a striking grey and gold veining on a crisp white background.

Offering a bold and sophisticated take on natural stone, the Breccia Escuro Strata Ceramic combines deep earthy tones with dramatic veining for a striking effect.

Exuding warmth and luxury, the Gold Antico Strata Ceramic is inspired by the rich elegance of antique marble. Featuring a blend of golden hues, warm beige tones and intricate veining, this surface adds a touch of opulence to any kitchen.

The Macaubas Bianco Strata Ceramic captures the serene beauty of natural quartzite with the durability of advanced ceramic technology. Featuring a soft white base with elegant, flowing grey veining, it creates a timeless, sophisticated look which is suited to both classic and contemporary interiors.

Offering a bold reinterpretation of classic marble, the Verde Calacatta Strata Ceramic features a striking white base with deep green veining for a dramatic yet luxurious look. Inspired by the rare beauty of Verde Calacatta marble, this surface brings a unique, sophisticated aesthetic to kitchens.

The White Dolomite Strata Ceramic has been inspired by the refined beauty of natural dolomite marble. Featuring a crisp white base with delicate grey veining, it offers a sophisticated yet versatile look that complements both classic and contemporary interiors. Whether paired with light cabinetry for a seamless aesthetic or darker tones for contrast, the White Dolomite Strata Ceramic brings a sense of luxury and refinement to kitchens.

www.pws.co.uk/section/worksurfaces

Two new free commissioning promotions for 2025

JH208
ACV
BY IDEAL HEATING
smart

ACV UK has announced the launch of two new free commissioning offers available across all products in the ACV range. The first promotion offers customers the chance to receive free commissioning when they install three or more ACV products in one plant room. With a diverse selection of products available, customers can choose from combinations such as the HeatMaster Evo, Evo S, and Smart L320 to qualify for free commissioning on all three or more chosen ACV products.

Additionally, for customers who install a total of ten ACV products over the year, a new loyalty program from ACV unlocks free commissioning for the remainder of 2025. To qualify customers simply need to install and register the warranties of any ten ACV products. Importantly, customers can take advantage of both promotions simultaneously.

The latest commissioning promotions from ACV have been designed to ensure customers have everything they need to ensure optimum performance from their ACV products. For more information visit **www.acv.com/gb**

ECLISSE: Specialists in quality and innovation

JH10

ECLISSE has established itself as a market leader through its unwavering commitment to quality and innovation. Specialising in pocket door systems, ECLISSE is renowned for transforming interior spaces with its highly engineered products that blend functionality with aesthetics. The company's dedication to excellence is evident in every aspect of its offerings, from the robust construction of its systems to the meticulous attention to detail in design.

ECLISSE's success can be attributed to its pioneering approach to space optimization. By offering a wide range of customizable options, ECLISSE caters to diverse architectural and interior design needs, ensuring that their products seamlessly integrate into any setting. This adaptability, combined with the use of high-quality materials, ensures that ECLISSE pocket doors are not only visually appealing but also durable and reliable.

Furthermore, ECLISSE continually invests in research and development, pushing the boundaries of what's possible in door technology. The company's innovative solutions set industry benchmarks and reinforce its leadership position. By consistently delivering superior products that enhance both residential and commercial spaces, ECLISSE remains at the forefront of the market, trusted by professionals and homeowners alike.

0333 5770828 | www.eclisse.co.uk

A floor with Feelings

With 57 designs to choose from and comfort with every footstep, customers will be feeling delight with the latest cushion vinyl collection from **Beauflor**. Ideal for social housing, Feelings brings an affordable and stylish floor that has all the benefits of warmth, comfort and practicality. Feelings features Beauflor's Premium Coating for a floor that's easy to clean and that keeps its looks. Alongside comes a water-resistant surface and R10 slip resistance that makes it a good choice for residential kitchens and bathrooms. Design-wise, the floor features a wide choice of options: wood planks in every grain, herringbone, stone and ceramic tile designs all make an appearance in this comprehensive range.

Long life laminate floors for housing

Made in Belgium and stocked in the UK, **Unilin Flooring's** laminate floors provide housing projects with a durable and easy to maintain floor finish. And, thanks to waterproof and cost-effective options, specifiers can choose a long life flooring solution based on their project requirements. Through the Quick-Step, Elka, Vitality and Forester ranges, housing projects benefit from Unilin Flooring's expertise and in-house production. Inventor of the famed Uniclic locking installation, Unilin has been manufacturing laminate flooring since 1990 and is widely known for its premium Quick-Step laminate floors. The Majestic and Capture collections both benefit from a waterproof construction and Uniclic for fast and easy installation.

Isafe 70 is up to the challenge at Retford Town Hall

Isafe 70 compact safety sheet vinyl flooring from **IVC Commercia**l has been installed at Retford Town Hall, Nottinghamshire. As part of the refurbishment to improve council amenities and maintain its status as a destination for the local community, flooring contractor Lincolnshire Carpet Warehouse was asked to supply and install a fit-for-purpose floor. Isafe 70 is a compact safety vinyl floor that achieves TRRL 42+ slip restraint. With a 0.70mm wear layer, it's an exceptionally durable finish that can withstand constant use, making it ideal for areas where safety is a concern. Using Hypergrip+ to aid maintenance and maintain appearance, the floor is available in a wide range of wood plank, herringbone and material effects.

Restored and renewed for future generations

Architecture studio Nex has undertaken a comprehensive refurbishment of The Jackson Library at Exeter College, Oxford. The historical building has been sensitively restored with thoughtful contemporary interventions to create additional study space for students, and improve the building's circulation, access, environmental performance, and services.

The material palette for the Grade II listed building is a considered fusion of old and new, placing an emphasis on craftsmanship and natural materials. Bespoke oak joinery is teamed with **Junckers** 185mm wide Oak Nordic plank floorboards fitted throughout the study areas. The solid wood floor provides a hard-wearing surface for the expected high-traffic levels and the white-pigmented Nordic finish reflects natural light from the building's new roof lights.

Solid wood is an excellent flooring choice for heritage buildings. It offers both an authentic, natural material traditionally specified for a building of this calibre, and a hard-wearing surface with a design life of 60+ years.

www.junckers.co.uk

Simply Fantastic Acoustic Solution at Thackley Primary School, Bradford

Thackley Primary School in Bradford was experiencing acoustic problems within the hall. The room provided a multi-use space but the amount of hard surfaces meant that excessive reverberation made for an unpleasant acoustic environment. Head of the School, Annette Patterson decided that something needed to be done and made contact with **Sound Reduction Systems (SRS)**. Annette sent across details of the hall, including dimensions and photographs from which the technical team were able to model the space using software in order to provide an accurate quote. SRS then visited the school to take detailed measurements and discuss the various options SRS Director, Alex Docherty commented: "It was clear that the acoustic environment was not ideal and that a treatment using one of our Class A rated Sonata products was required to solve the issue."

The estimated mid-frequency reverberation time was coming out at (Tmf) of 3.57s, which is far too high for this space. SRS calculated that 75sqm of their decorative Sonata panel absorbers would help resolve the problem, bringing the reverberation time down to (Tmf) of 1.13s, and provided the school with a design detailing where the panels would be installed. The school chose a combination of Suspended Sonata Vario panels and bonded Sonata Aurio panels and SRS were able to despatch their installation team within 2 weeks to fit the absorbers.

www.soundreduction.co.uk

a flooring specification *beyond numbers*

***Paul Webb** Commercial Manager UK & EIRE, Unilin Flooring, discusses how a successful flooring specification must deliver long-term value...*

When it comes to choosing flooring for projects thoughts often turn to the standards of specification. Many people who specify flooring will be familiar with terms like Class 33 or R10, but ensuring a floor delivers the best possible long-term value is more than just choosing it because it achieves the basics of the specification.

Manufacturers invest heavily in making sure that their floors can also add value to projects in other ways. Longer life, easier maintenance, improved sustainability and simpler installation are all considered in product development but may well be overlooked in the strictest terms of specification by numbers. However, it is these areas in which a floor will really deliver value to the project and so they should all be part of selecting the flooring.

Flooring specifications will often start with the material: wood, vinyl and laminate all being common choices. While on most occasions this is due to affordability – undoubtedly there is a correlation between the budget of the project and the chosen floor type – there are times when it can be worth exploring options. This is particularly so when the flooring type is being chosen for a specific reason such as aesthetics.

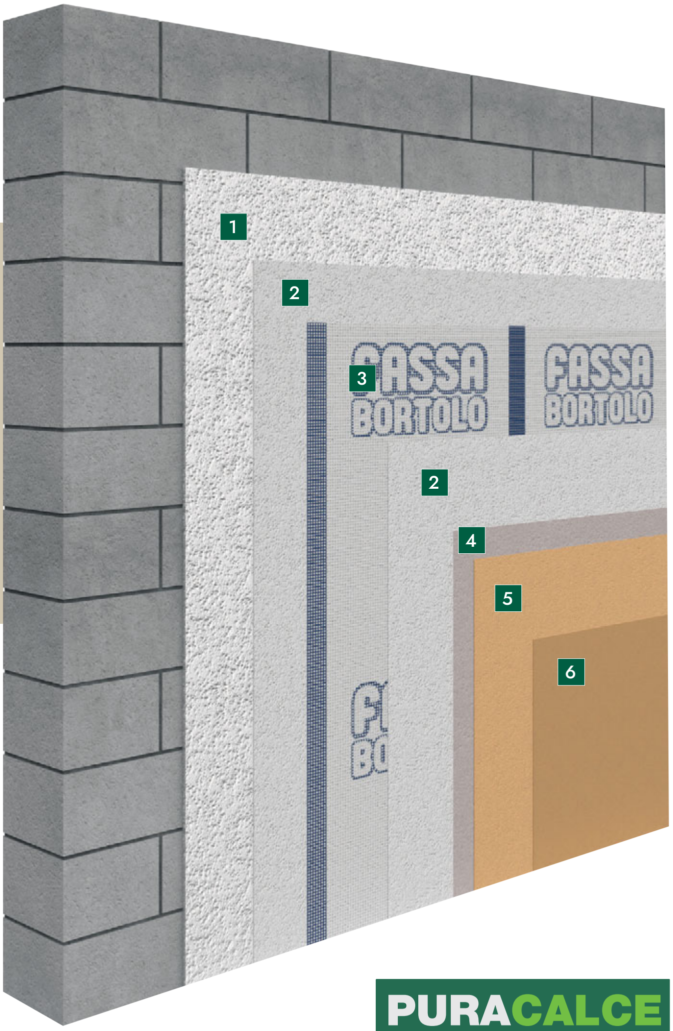
No where is this better illustrated than wood flooring, which is desired aesthetically but often overlooked because of worries about long-term care. Traditionally, wood has been something of a compromise: a charming natural look and feel, but at the price of specialist and intensive maintenance that affects its suitability for projects where this is neither practical nor affordable for the client.

Continued on page 32...

FASSALIME

CYCLE 2A RENDERING ONTO MEDIUM DENSE BLOCKWORK (7.3 KN)

HYDRATED LIME RENDERING CYCLE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2
3
FASSA BORTOLO
FASSA BORTOLO
2
4
5
6

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BASE COAT

1 **KB 13** Bio lime base coat plaster
OR **K 1710** Bio traditional fibre reinforced base coat

FINISH COAT

2 **S 605** Bio white finish coat plaster
3 **FASSANET 160** Reinforcing mesh

PRIMER AND DECORATIVE COAT

4 **FS 412** Primer
5 **RSR 421** Siloxane-enhanced coating
6 **SKIN 432** Siloxane-enhanced finish

KB 13 OR **K 1710**

KB 13
K 1710
PURACALCE
FASSA BORTOLO

S 605

S 605
PURACALCE
FASSA BORTOLO

FASSANET 160

FS 412

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JH218

However, recent advancements in manufacturing have seen this needle shift, and it's now possible to specify a wood floor that is a more viable ongoing proposition.

Advancements have seen waterproof, easy to maintain wood floors enter the market. Not only do these floors give better long-term value within existing 'typical' wood floor projects, but they also open up new opportunities for use. Now it is not only possible to enjoy an easier to maintain wood floor in the living spaces of apartments, but also in bathrooms and kitchens.

For those projects where wood is ruled out because of a high initial price, the decision is one balanced between aesthetics, durability and ease of care for the end user. This has seen laminate and vinyl dominate, with luxury vinyl tiles (LVT) almost becoming the de facto choice in the last couple of years.

Thanks to the latest developments in surface textures and gloss levels, these floors are now impressively authentic looking in their natural wood and stone effects. In fact, it is becoming hard to tell the difference between high-quality, premium vinyl and laminate floors and natural counterparts. Both also deliver an easy to maintain finish that's lasting, though if the longest life is the primary concern, then laminate's exceptionally tough surface is worth consideration. It is now also available in waterproof qualities just like LVT making it a comparable choice for many projects. However, it must be said that if there are concerns around acoustics or walking comfort for users then LVT is a more viable option straight out of the box.

The Installation of these products is an area where you might want to consider your choice too. Nearly all laminate floors use click based installation, while vinyl offers both glue-down and rigid click. In vinyl, glue-down floors are more cost-effective for the initial purchase, but they do require an exceptionally well prepared subfloor to prevent ongoing issues. The right choice should be made at the advice of the manufacturer and contractor, who will have the best understanding of the implications of your project's conditions and environment.

Outside of these considerations, a floor's sustainability is also a factor for many specifications. Here, attention needs to be paid to the manufacturer's own broader commitments, as well as the product's specific impact, best identified as its total Global Warming Potential (GWP). Ideally this should be assessed through a cradle to grave LCA, preferably as an independently verified EPD. The truth here is that the issue is too complex and nuanced to be one of 'X is better than Y', but as a rule of thumb, your manufacturer should be willing to explore sustainably openly and honestly with you, so you can make a judgement based on accurate information.

So, there's plenty to consider when it comes to choosing a numbers-busting flooring specification, but the time and effort put in to making decisions outside of minimum requirements alone will certainly be well spent in delivering a floor with excellent long-term value and exceeding expectations.

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JH13

JH214
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New natural floor insulation solution

Ecological Building Systems has revealed a new lightweight thermal screed called Diathonite Thermostep.047. This latest addition to the range means Ecological Building Systems now offers a complete floor insulation solution, whether for suspended timber or solid floors.

The new Diathonite Thermostep.047 by Diasen is a sustainable thermal screed, manufactured from cork combined with lime, which is four times lighter than a traditional screed. It is also five times more insulating and six times more resistant than traditional screeds, with a minimum thickness of 30mm. Thermostep.047 offers both thermal and acoustic insulation performance with unique properties including lightness, strength and porosity.

Like all Ecological Building Systems natural flooring solutions, Thermostep.047 is fully breathable and is capable of regulating moisture and resisting mould due to its lime-based alkalinity.

In addition, Thermostep.047 is easy to install and can be hand or spray applied with a suitable machine. Once dry, a range of floor coverings from tiles to parquet flooring can be directly applied onto the screed.

With an extremely low lambda value (0.047W/m/k), Thermostep.047 offers insulation from both heat and cold.

Website: www.ecologicalbuildingsystems.com

Professional meets luxury in Mayfair

Offering beautifully designed workspaces in prestigious locations, **Havwoods** was delighted to be specified for its Magna flooring for Grosvenor's latest luxury flexible workspace in Mayfair. A stunning example of luxurious commercial design, 50 Grosvenor Hill offers fully equipped offices that meet the modern business customer's needs.

Working closely with Kinersley Kent Design on the project, Havwoods' Magna Walnut in Herringbone was chosen to adorn the floors of a number of areas within the two-storey building.

Offering exceptional practical benefits as well as design advantages, Magna is a magnetic raised access flooring system of tongue and groove engineered wood. Ideal for commercial projects thanks to its significantly quicker installation time and easy maintenance, it also boasts a short lead time of just four weeks.

Complementing the monochrome accents and rich palette of blue, green and gold, the Walnut finish brings a luxurious feel to the prestigious workspace, creating a wonderfully cohesive scheme that feels both welcoming and uplifting.

Website: www.havwoods.com/uk
Email: info@havwoods.com

New acoustic liner ensures great acoustics and easy handling

Both a building's users and its developers have a good reason to get excited about the new Troldtekt Plus 25 panels. This specially developed acoustic panel sets a high standard for both sound absorption and building efficiency.

Danish manufacturer **Troldtekt A/S** introduces yet another innovative solution for the construction industry: Troldtekt Plus 25 is an acoustic panel that combines high sound absorption with significant practical advantages such as low weight, space-saving design and low overall costs.

In practice, Troldtekt Plus 25 is a two-layer panel but only 25mm thick, just like Troldtekt's traditional single-layer panels. A special acoustic liner made of non-woven acoustic fleece is applied to the back of the panel and ensures high sound absorption.

As a suspended ceiling, Troldtekt Plus 25 has a so-called alpha value of 0.9 (αw = 0.90), which means that it can achieve Class A sound absorption at a suspension depth of 200mm. The fact that the panel excels in the low frequencies (125-250 Hz) makes it perfect for applications such as classrooms and meeting rooms.

The acoustic fleece itself is so thin that the panel measures and weighs the same as a traditional 25mm Troldtekt acoustic panel – without a backing layer. This makes it significantly easier to stack, cut, lift and assemble on site. With a thickness of only 25mm and a weight of 11.5 kg, Troldtekt Plus 25 offers significant logistical and practical advantages including transportation, storage and installation.

Depending on the panel specified, reaction to fire is classed in accordance with EN 13501 as B-s1,d0 or A2-s1,d0 respectively. Cradle to Cradle Certified® at Gold level, Troldtekt wood wool acoustic panels are manufactured using wood from certified forests (PEFC/09-31-030 and FSC®C115450) and can contribute positively to a building's BREEAM, WELL or LEED points.

Samples, case studies and technical guidance are available from **www.troldtekt.co.uk** or see our product listings on NBS **(https://bit.ly/3vxoTfq)** or Material Bank **(www.materialbank.eu)**.

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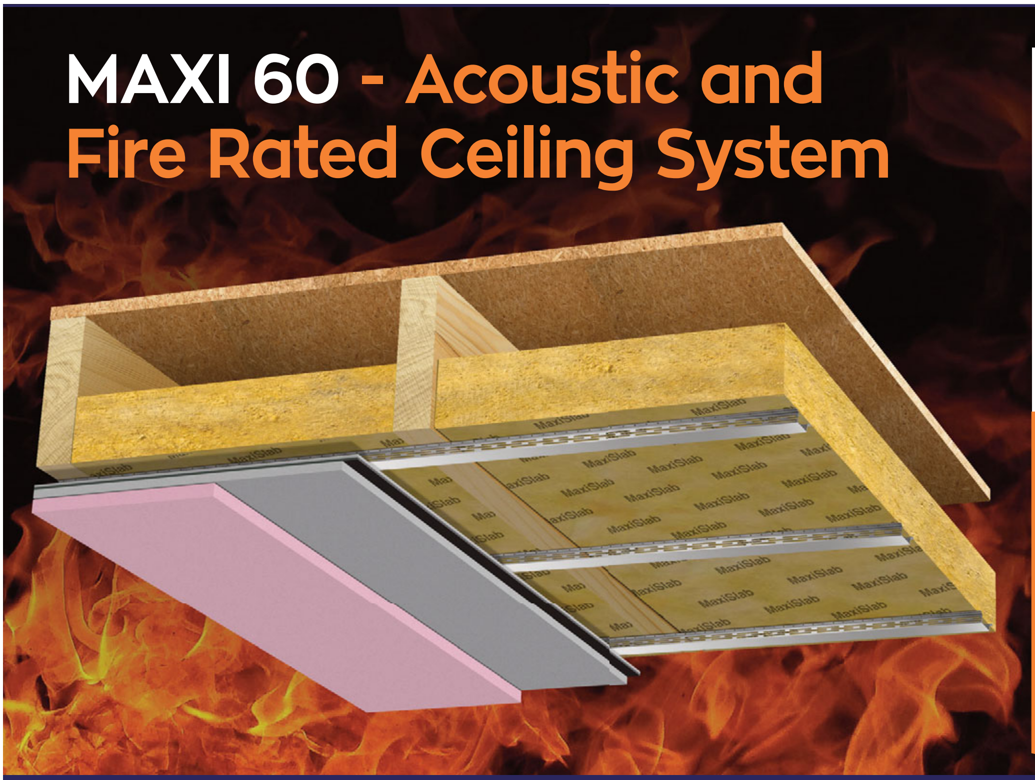

Maxiboard is a high performance and versatile acoustic building board, designed to significantly reduce the passage of sound through walls and ceilings in residential and commercial environments.

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JH16

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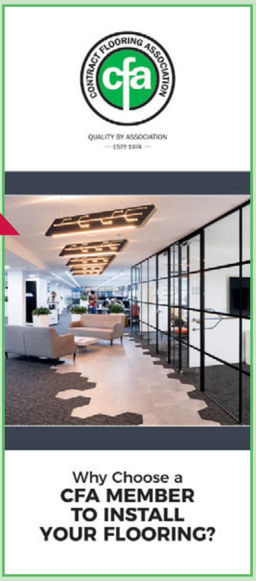
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JH216
Swish
HOLIDAY APARTMENTS

Bringing bespoke luxury to Blackpool apartments

A traditional hotel in Blackpool has been transformed into nine bespoke luxury holiday apartments to provide guests with modern and stylish accommodation.

Located by the Fylde Coast, Swish Holiday Apartments combine comfort and style, offering visitors a home away from home.

Thoughtfully designed by owner Tom Sumner and his team to enhance the unique character of each space, the transformation commenced in 2023, and the project was completed last year.

To ensure the longevity of the paintwork, **Crown Trade's** Clean Extreme Scrubbable Matt was used on the apartment's interior walls and ceilings. It's a durable, stain-resistant emulsion that can withstand regular cleaning without compromising its rich colour saturation making it the perfect choice for future-proofing the interior.

Crown Trade Clean Extreme Scrubbable Matt can also be tinted to a variety of colours, which enabled Tom to curate his own palette. This included rich shades of blue, black, and grey in The Grandstand and The Highroller suites, while softer lilac and mint tones were chosen to add elegance to The Royal Enclosure and The Regal rooms, with the overall feel of the palette aligning to the apartment's sophisticated design.

To support colour selection, Crown Paints offers a range of resources, including a fan deck that organises shades into colour families for easy reference and Real Paint samples – A5 pre-painted swatches that help assess colours in different settings and lighting conditions. In addition, expert guidance from Crown Paint's Colour Studio is available to assist with creating effective colour schemes for various sectors and environments.

www.crownpaintsprofessional.com/specification-services/colour-service/

FP McCann lays down the foundations for Midlothian social housing scheme

FP McCann's precast concrete T-Beam and Block flooring system has been installed as part of a £17.5m social housing project in the Midlothian village, Gorebridge. Scottish housebuilder Cruden is underway with the development that will deliver a diverse range of housing options, including 75 flats, cottage flats and houses. Notably, the scheme will feature ten extra care units, two bariatric units and a four-bedroom, six person wheel-chair accessible house.

Cruden has been working closely with partners Midlothian Council and architect Hackland & Dore to ensure the design of the development is tailored to meet the diverse needs of the Gorebridge community with accessibility, sustainability and community at its core.

In addition to innovative heat-pump heating solutions, the homes will feature high-performance insulation to ensure energy-efficiency; maintaining comfortable indoor temperatures year-round while reducing energy consumption and utility costs for tenants.

Contributing to the advanced heating and insulation features on the project, FP McCann's precast concrete T-Beam and Block flooring has been specified as a single span system across the brickwork foundation layer. The tried and tested beam and block process not only provides a solid and safe working platform, but also a floor that has excellent thermal insulation, fire resisting and noise reducing properties.

The FP McCann pre-stressed reinforced precast concrete T-Beams are 150mm deep with single span lengths of 5,375mm. Standard building blocks are simply placed between beam spans to complete the floor.

Commenting on the T-Beam and Block flooring, Willie Marshall, Senior Site Manager for Cruden said: "This offsite manufactured precast concrete foundation flooring system is quick and simple to install. It speeds up the build process as it allows for groundworks to continue uninterrupted during inclement weather. Reducing the requirement for ready mixed concrete and mortar at foundation level is a major benefit in the early stages of the build."

website: www.fpmccann.co.uk

Are you looking for timber windows and doors for your project?

The Sash Window Workshop specialises in high-quality timber windows and doors for renovations, extensions, and new build projects. It offers a supply-only service nationwide, with installation across London and Southern England. The windows and doors are designed to be energy-efficient, secure, and meet building regulations, including, when required, complying with conservation area and listed building specifications. New joinery is made in its manufacturing facilities in Bracknell, Berkshire, and the company will work with you to ensure project deadlines are met. The Sash Window Workshop prides itself on providing a high-quality product and service.

Government missing major clean energy opportunity

Following the announcement of the Planning and Infrastructure Bill, a renewable energy expert is warning the government of a missed clean energy opportunity in solar energy in car parks.

Damian Baker, the founder and managing director of UK-based **RenEnergy**, is drawing attention the 1,456GWh of annual solar energy potential identified by an ongoing research project commissioned by the organisation. This could be provided by solar car ports over 629,900 suitable spaces across commercial car parks and is the equivalent electricity required to meet the average yearly consumption of around 404,000 UK homes.

The call comes as the Bill cited clean energy projects that help achieve clean power by 2030, including wind and solar power, would be prioritised for grid connections. It also cited that reform would help accelerate development and grid connections for industrial sites and commercial property like data centres.

With planning concerns and opposition to renewable energy production sites often cited as obstacles to rollout, Baker is arguing car park solar installations address challenges that can be associated with ground arrays in countryside and farmland. The solar PV canopies above parking spaces that provide energy to adjoining businesses as well as EV charging make use of land that is already used for parking and see planning and DNO approval in around eight weeks.

Providing a renewable and reliable energy source for businesses, Baker is also arguing that these installations can also reduce the offtake of businesses to provide more resilience while the grid is being upgraded.

For more information or to find out more about the research being conducted, visit: **www.renenergy.co.uk/carparkresearch**

Clement Naked Steel windows and doors enhance newly renovated Surrey workspace

Clement Windows Group is thrilled to have manufactured and installed new steel windows and doors with a Naked Steel finish for Kew Studios and Works in Richmond, Surrey.

Kew Studios and Works is no ordinary workspace. Formerly a manor house, the building has been completely refurbished with a sympathetic touch to ensure that its original period charm is still apparent in the new design.

Sustainability was a key part of the refurbishment. Solar panels, a living green roof and electric vehicle charging points have been included. The development has already achieved a “B” Energy Performance Certificate and it is hoped that it will go on to gain BREEAM Very Good certification.

Clement manufactured steel doors and windows from its W40 range for the outside of the building. Instead of being painted, these have been left with a contemporary Clement Naked Steel galvanised finish which gives a nod to the original industrial aesthetic of the building.

For the series of internal doors and screens, Clement manufactured Jansen Janisol 2 and C4 profiles to ensure ample natural light flows through the space.

Clement offers a choice of finishes in the Naked Steel range. The basic steel frame can be galvanised or applied with a clear lacquer finish for external applications, while for internal frames there is a variety of different options, from rusted, shot blasted, clear lacquered, galvanised or painted.

Clement W40 bespoke steel windows and doors are perfect for metal window replacement projects where the pattern of the original fenestration is to be maintained. The frames are manufactured from hot rolled steel profiles, which are produced from 98% recycled steel source material.

Clement manufactures external and internal single and double doors from Jansen cold formed steel profiles which meet the latest specifications for energy efficiency and fire protection and due to their resilience are very suitable for areas of high footfall.

For further information contact Clement:
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www.clementwindows.co.uk

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energy efficiency in *heritage homes*

Energy costs are soaring, making insulation and energy efficiency an increasing priority for all. But when it comes to historic homes, a unique challenge is presented: improving energy efficiency without compromising on historical integrity.
***Luke Brooks,** Senior Commercial Manager, Specialist Packed Products at Tarmac, explains why lime plasters can significantly enhance thermal performance in period properties without risking architectural heritage...*

Achieving efficiency through lime
Energy efficiency has always been a challenge for the UK housing stock. Not only does the UK have the oldest and least efficient housing stock in Europe, but around one in five households across the UK are living in poorly insulated homes[1]. Alongside the race towards net-zero and high energy costs, energy efficiency is now an unignorable issue.

For new build homes, a solution has come in the form of the Future Homes Standard, due to arrive in 2025. However, for historic homes the answer is less straightforward, with energy efficient renovations having to take great care to protect architectural heritage.

One way to tackle this issue head on is to look to plaster, specifically breathable plasters such as lime. Lime plaster has become the preferred energy efficient choice for many renovators and architects due to its intrinsic moisture management, otherwise known as its breathability. The breathability of lime plaster comes from its microporous structure, which enables controlled vapour transmission while maintaining resistance to liquid water penetration. Simply, moisture is released, not retained, unlike the case with conventional gypsum plaster.

This breathability not only allows for flexibility, perfect for protecting older buildings against cracking, but also minimises the risk of condensation and mould growth – leading to less energy usage. The controlled vapour transmission is intrinsic to many modern lime plasters, maintaining resistance to liquid water penetration and helping to keep walls dry during the UK's damp winters.

Lime plaster has other properties which makes it the optimal choice for energy efficiency. For example, lime plaster is known to have a high heat inertia, meaning it can absorb not just moisture, but heat, to control and stabilise indoor temperatures. Moreover, lime plaster can reduce the effects of thermal bridging due to its microporous structure, meaning it disrupts direct heat loss pathways, enhancing thermal performance.

Energy efficient and more

Lime plaster being ideal for moisture management is not the only reason to use it for renovation works. Lime plaster also prevents the corrosion of metal fixtures, such as angle beads and lath, a bonus when protecting original features is crucial.

Furthermore, lime plaster is a more visually pleasing option due to its soft finish, compared to applying boards to exteriors or interiors. Lastly, lime plaster's ability to absorb and release CO_2, combined with the naturally high pH of lime, creates a healthier indoor climate for people suffering from allergies or other conditions made worse by poor air quality.

Lime plasters are paving the way to construction's net zero future. As mentioned above, lime plaster can absorb CO_2, creating a natural carbon sink and helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Lime plasters are also able to be recycled and are biodegradable, minimising waste generation and assisting in the creation of a circular economy.

With a significant amount of UK housing stock being older and of historic value, finding a viable renovation solution to achieve energy efficiency has become a priority. Lime plaster is fast becoming the number one option, with modern plasters providing renovators a solution to minimise damp, maximise heat insulation and control indoor temperatures, all while protecting key architectural features. Combined with the overall sustainability of the material, it's clear that protecting architectural heritage does not have to come at the cost of a greener future.

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[1] *https://housingdigital.co.uk/a-fifth-of-uk-homes-facing-chilly-winter-new-study-finds/*

enhancing modern healthcare design *with fire safety glass*

When it comes to the healthcare sector, ensuring the safety of hospital staff, patients and visitors is paramount. Passive fire protection plays a crucial role in safeguarding lives, with fire safety glass at the forefront of these measures. With the diverse range of spaces and functions within healthcare buildings, each with its own set of unique challenges, architects and fabricators need to demand more from their fire safety glass specifications. ***Andy Lake,*** *Pyroguard's UK & IRE Sales Director, shares more on this…*

Whether it be waiting areas, outpatient recovery, operating theatres or MRI rooms, healthcare buildings consist of multiple different spaces. Each zone serves a distinct purpose, bringing with it varying needs in terms of design, materials and finishes. Fire safety glass has become an essential, versatile specification in these spaces, offering not only protection but also contributing to the overall aesthetic and functionality of these environments.

Fire safety and compartmentation

Safety, particularly fire safety, is a primary consideration in healthcare spaces. The size and complexity of these buildings, combined with the challenge of evacuating vulnerable patients, creates significant logistical concerns during a fire. Fire safety glass can be a game-changer in ensuring that safe evacuation routes are maintained and that patients unable to move are protected.

As a result of this, a common application for fire safety glass is compartmentation, whereby a building is split into different fire safe zones. By introducing compartmentation, healthcare facilities can protect patients in critical care who may not be able to evacuate quickly, while simultaneously providing emergency services with clear, safe paths. Depending on the level of protection needed, fire safety glass classifications such as E (providing protection against flames and smoke) to EI (providing the highest level of protection against heat and insulation) are often specified.

Design for well-being

While fire protection is essential, the design and aesthetics of healthcare spaces can significantly impact patient recovery and well-being. Studies show that interior design can influence the healing process, with natural light being a key contributor. Glass, known for its ability to bring in natural light, is increasingly used in healthcare environments to create open, bright, and welcoming spaces for patients, visitors and staff.

Impact resistance

As healthcare facilities move towards open, airy designs, glass becomes integral in creating these vibrant spaces. However, glass used in these environments must do more than just provide fire protection; it must also withstand everyday impacts. Whether it's accidental falls or people leaning on it; toughened glass with 1B1 impact resistance (in accordance with BS EN 12600) ensures that both staff and patients remain safe.

Acoustics: keeping the noise down

Healthcare environments are often bustling and noisy, which can be overwhelming for patients, especially in recovery or care areas. Fire safety glass can help mitigate this issue, providing not only fire protection but also sound insulation. In this case, a toughened laminated fire safety glass can not only provide fire protection but also improve sound insulation, creating a calmer, more serene environment for patients to recover in.

Protecting patient privacy

As glass becomes more prominent in healthcare design, protecting patient privacy is a growing concern. Traditional solutions like blinds are often impractical or unhygienic in clinical environments. Fire safety glass can be engineered to provide privacy through integrated blinds, obscured or mirrored finishes, or even switchable glass – which transitions from clear to opaque at the push of a button. This ensures that patient privacy is respected while maintaining the aesthetic integrity of the space.

Smoke control systems

Toxic smoke is one of the most dangerous threats during a fire, often proving more deadly than flames. To combat this risk, many healthcare facilities are incorporating glazed smoke control systems. Made from toughened glass, these systems can be suspended from the ceiling and offer a high-performance solution, yet still aesthetically pleasing (when compared to traditional heavy material sheets or mechanical smoke curtains).

Healthcare buildings are inherently complex, with stringent safety, hygiene, and comfort requirements. Fire safety glass can alleviate many of these concerns, offering a multi-functional solution that meets fire safety, design, privacy, and acoustics all in one. When working with an experienced provider like Pyroguard, architects and specifiers can ensure that all of these needs are met, creating spaces that are not only safe but also welcoming and functional.

JH19

Protecting Buildings and Budgets:

Yeoman Shield's Comprehensive Solutions for Wall and Door Protection

Maintaining the aesthetic appeal and structural integrity of buildings in high-traffic environments is a constant challenge. Scuffs, dents, and other damages accumulate quickly, resulting in frequent and costly repairs. Yeoman Shield provides innovative solutions that protect buildings and deliver significant long-term savings.

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For over 55 years Yeoman Shield has led the way in wall and door protection, helping facilities across various industries keep their interiors intact. Whether it's hospitals, schools, or commercial spaces, our products are designed to withstand the demands of high-traffic areas.

We offer a range of wall & door protection panels, door edge protectors and impact-resistant corner protectors that shield surfaces from everyday wear. Available in multiple finishes and colours, our solutions protect and enhance your interior space. Customisation is a key feature, allowing us to match your aesthetic needs while ensuring durability and cleanliness.

Handrails and Corner Protection

Yeoman Shield's handrails and corner protection systems provide both safety and style. Ideal for healthcare, schools, and public spaces our handrails offer stability and minimise wall damage. Our corner protection absorbs impact, safeguarding edges from chips and dents reducing maintenance and maintaining a professional, welcoming environment.

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The quality of installation is just as important as the products themselves. Yeoman Shield's expert team ensures flawless results with each installation. Trained to the highest standards, our professionals guarantee that your protection solutions are fitted perfectly and function as intended. From consultation to installation, we work closely with you, providing support every step of the way.

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Fire doors are essential for slowing the spread of fire and protecting lives. Yeoman Shield's Fire Door Services ensure your fire doors remain compliant and operational. Our expert team conducts thorough inspections, identifies potential issues, and provides tailored solutions. We also offer fire-rated door protection products that enhance durability without compromising fire integrity, providing peace of mind to building owners and occupants.

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Yeoman Shield is a trusted partner across various sectors, including healthcare, education, and commercial properties. In care environments, our products help create safe spaces reducing long-term maintenance costs.

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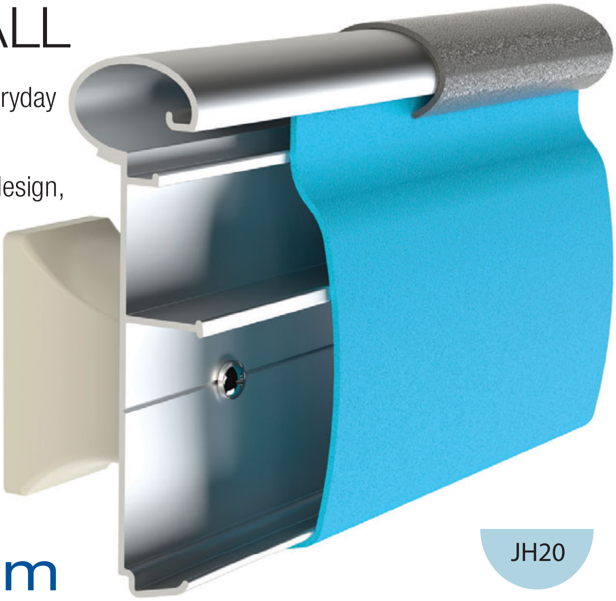

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JH20

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NEWARK SHOWGROUND | 27 JUNE 2025

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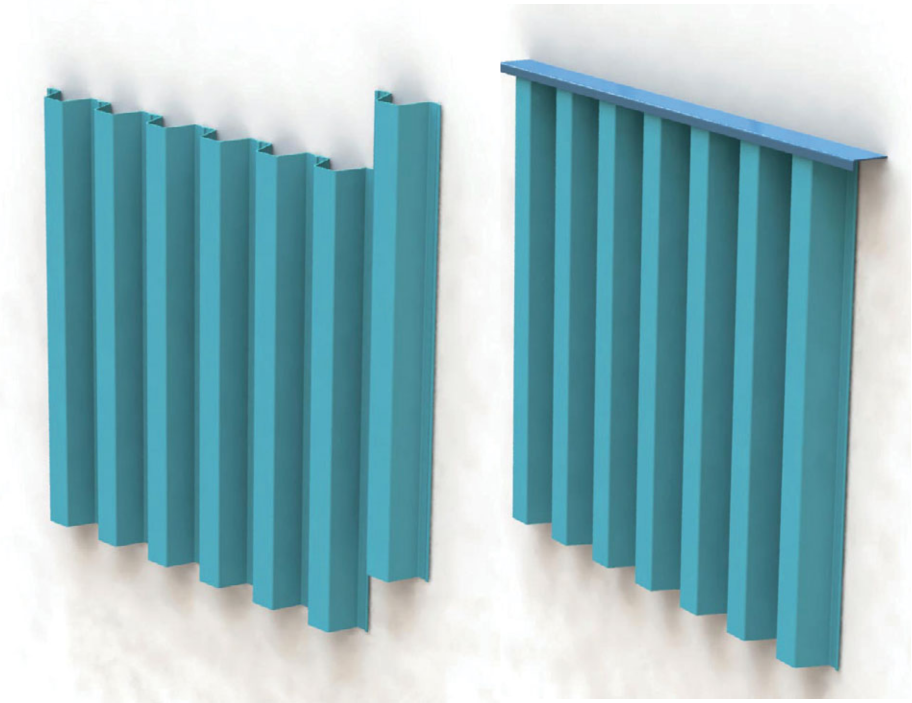
combating flood risks with *composites*

Flooding is the most destructive natural disaster worldwide, causing over 250,000 fatalities over the past 50 years, accounting for 40% of all losses from natural catastrophes. Here ***Lauri Turunen****, product manager at composites manufacturer Exel Composites, examines how sheet piling materials like steel and PVC cannot tackle all the challenges posed by harsh environments, and how pultruded composites offer a robust, corrosion-resistant alternative...*



Sheet piles are essential in construction, commonly used for retaining walls, flood defenses and erosion control. They provide stability by preventing soil movement and water ingress, playing a crucial role in infrastructure projects. Understanding their material composition and associated challenges is key to effective construction.

Challenges of traditional sheet pile materials

Traditionally, sheet piles are made from steel and PVC. Steel, while strong, is vulnerable to corrosion, especially in marine environments where saltwater accelerates rusting. For example, in coastal areas, steel sheet piles can lose structural integrity over time and require consistent maintenance, adding to overall costs.

Beyond corrosion, steel's weight presents significant challenges. Heavier sheet piles require larger machinery for transportation and installation, driving up labour and handling costs. This adds complexity to projects, particularly in remote or difficult-to-access locations.

Polyvinyl chloride (PVC), introduced as a corrosion-resistant alternative, is lighter than steel, making handling and installation easier. However, it has limitations in stiffness and long-term durability, which can impact performance in demanding environments.

The advantages of pultruded FRP composites in sheet piling

Composite materials, particularly fiber-reinforced polymer (FRP) composites offer an invaluable alternative for extreme applications such as those in coastal or industrial settings. FRP sheet piles made from E-glass fibers and thermoset resins provide exceptional corrosion resistance, ensuring longevity even in challenging environments. Unlike steel, which deteriorates in saline conditions, or wood that decays in moisture, FRP composite sheet piles remain unaffected by such environmental factors.

Although initial costs may be higher for FRP, its lightweight nature reduces transportation and handling expenses. Combined with its long-term durability, this can lead to substantial savings over the lifespan of a project. With fewer maintenance requirements and a significantly extended service life compared to traditional materials, FRP proves to be a cost-effective investment.

FRP composites excel in harsh environments, resisting degradation from saltwater and harsh chemicals while maintaining structural integrity, even under extreme temperatures. The versatility of FRP also allows for different surface finishes and colours, providing greater aesthetic flexibility than steel, which requires coatings that will degrade over time and needs periodic maintenance.

FRP's lightweight properties make handling and installation simpler, reducing both labour costs and logistical challenges. With tensile strengths reaching several hundred to over a thousand MPa – well above PVC's typical sub-hundred MPa range – FRP offers superior resistance and reliability for demanding environments. Additionally, FRP can be customized to meet specific structural needs, providing a flexibility that PVC lacks.

As the risk of flooding remains critical, resilient infrastructure is essential. FRP sheet piles represent a robust solution for challenging environments.

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Reuse & Refill to Reduce Plastic Waste

Plastic is a problem! On average, a single person in the UK uses three plastic water bottles a week – that's more than 7.7bn plastic water bottles in the UK per year. Once a convenient and cheap solution, single-use plastic bottles end their short lives in landfill, oceans and rivers, causing significant worldwide pollution. Thanks to high-profile awareness campaigns, in 2023, the UK government banned single-use items changing consumer habits for the better. Recycling is also increasing, with almost two thirds[1] of packaging waste in the UK now being recycled. But is it really the solution?

According to the City to Sea website[2], only 9% of all plastic ever produced has been recycled, and the UK's current plastic recycling rate stands at 45%. So, realistically, only a fraction of recyclable water bottles is recycled. And, if we consider that manufacturing plastic consumes significant amounts of energy and raw materials, the only real sustainable solution is re-use.

Refill campaign, changing habits

In 2015, only 20% of people in the UK used refillable water bottles, but, thanks to the Refill campaign from City to Sea, by 2023 this reached 60% of the population.

"If just 1 in 10 Brits Refilled just once a week, we'd save around 340 million plastic bottles a year."[3]

Launched in 2015, Refill is a campaign helping people find places to eat, drink and shop with less plastic. A free app identifies locations such as cafes and shops throughout the UK that provide free tap water to refill water bottles. The Refill campaign is making significant advances in encouraging consumers to adapt their behaviour. And where better to raise awareness and change behaviour than schools?

As a rule of thumb, young people aged between 9 and 13 should drink between 1.3-1.7 litres of water per day, according to the European Food Safety Authority. Mild dehydration can lead to a lack of concentration, fatigue, headaches and tiredness, which have a significant impact on performance. Providing ready access to refill stations in schools and education facilities has a positive impact on young people's health and will also reduce our reliance on plastic.

Sustainable, durable, hygienic

Refill stations in schools need to be robust as they face intensive use. DELABIE offers a wide range of drinking fountains specifically for high-footfall environments. Made from 304 stainless steel, a recyclable material that contributes to sustainable development, they can withstand impacts and abrasion and will not rust even if scratched. The valve mechanism is made from solid brass and has been tested and proven to be reliable for over 500,000 operations. Product reliability is reinforced by a 30-year warranty and DELABIE guarantees that replacement spare parts will be available for up to 50 years.

Stainless steel also has hygienic benefits, thanks to its bacteriostatic nature. DELABIE's drinking fountains have a polished satin finish, which provides a uniform, non-porous surface with minimal seams. These smooth surfaces and rounded edges mean there are fewer niches where bacteria can develop, making them easier to clean. The bowls feature a perforated flat-grid waste with no screws, which improves cleaning as well as reducing vandalism. To avoid unnecessary water wastage, the tap mechanism shuts off instantly when the push-button is released and the flow rate can be adjusted to suit the system pressure to reduce splashing.

Stainless steel water fountains are the perfect, sustainable solution for public spaces. Specifically designed for high footfall buildings, they will withstand the daily wear and tear experienced in school environments.

As we reduce our reliance on plastic, changing young people's habits by encouraging refill and re-use will benefit their well-being as well reducing their environmental impact.

For more information visit **www.delabie.co.uk**

Above right: DELABIE's water fountains are available in different heights for different age cohorts

Sources:
1. https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-waste-data/uk-statistics-on-waste
2. https://www.citytosea.org.uk
3. https://www.water.org.uk

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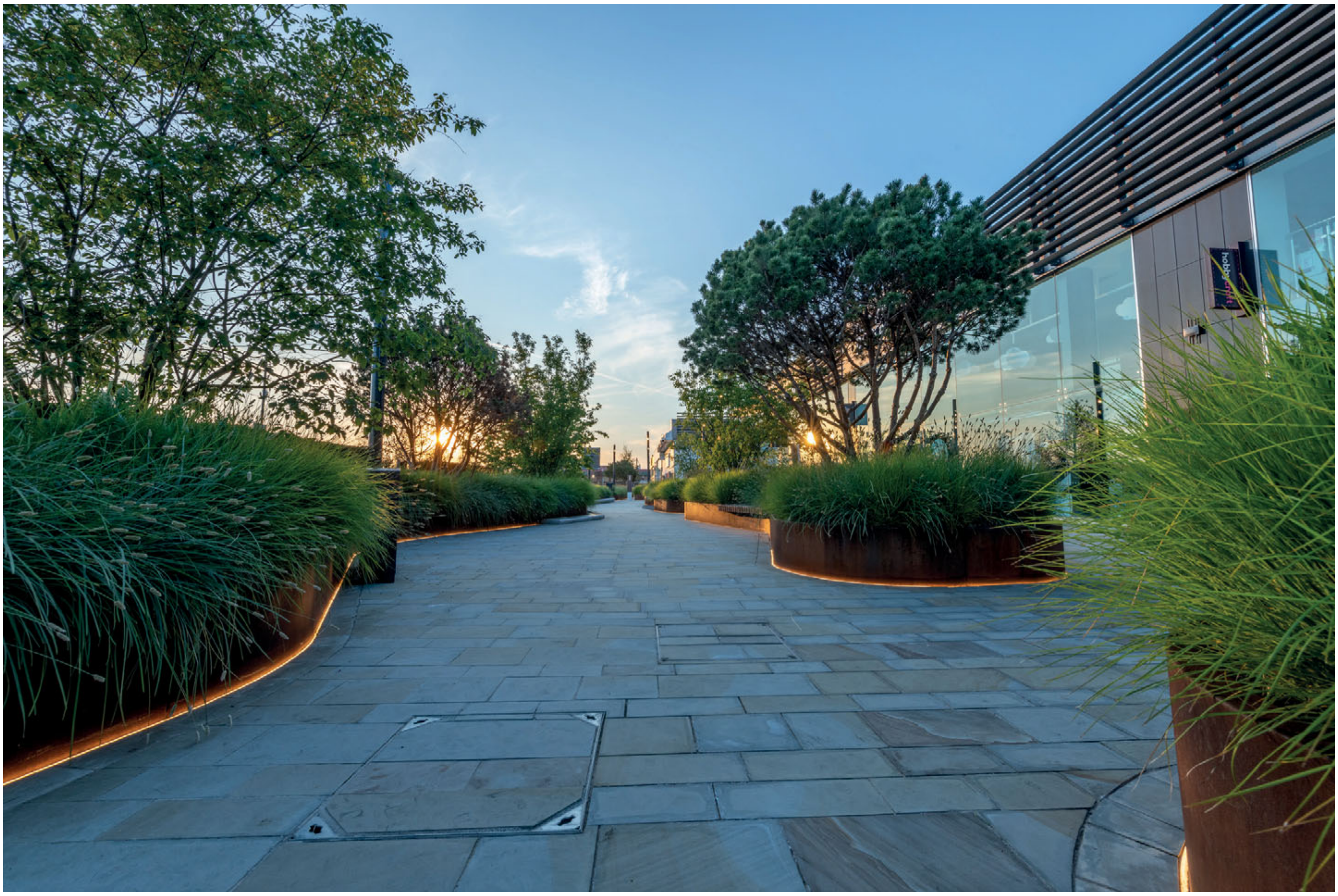

leveraging the urban landscape to make our *public realm safer*

***Rory McGoldrick,** CEO of integrated security and counter terrorism specialist, SAFECROWDS, discusses strategies integrating terrorism protection into urban planning and landscaping...*

In towns and cities across the UK, the drive to encourage footfall means that urban centres are evolving, with pedestrianisation, markets, and the use of town squares as event spaces all creating environments where crowds are likely to congregate.

The challenge for placemakers and urban designers is to integrate hostile vehicle mitigation and security measures into urban centres, while retaining uniqueness and a welcoming aesthetic.

What is HVM?

Hostile vehicle mitigation systems (HVM) are barriers or bollards that have been tested to withstand a vehicle impact in order to protect pedestrians. HVM systems are rated in line with test criteria that certifies their performance according to the size, speed, and trajectory of the impacting vehicle, and they can be temporary (surface mounted) or permanently installed with foundations.

While many events held in public locations are now protected using temporary HVM, there is a growing trend towards integrating permanent HVM into the public realm. When specified as part of a landscaping project, this provides an opportunity to protect people, while seamlessly integrating HVM into the public realm in a way that is both operationally considered and aesthetically appropriate.

Risk Assessment and early engagement

If there is even a possibility that HVM might be a requirement for a public realm regeneration or landscaping project, early engagement with a specialist that can deliver a Threat, Vulnerability and Risk Assessment (TVRA) and Vehicle Dynamics Assessment (VDA) and advise on suitable solutions is essential. It is much easier and more cost-effective to integrate HVM into the urban environment as part of a public realm and landscaping

Continued on page 50...

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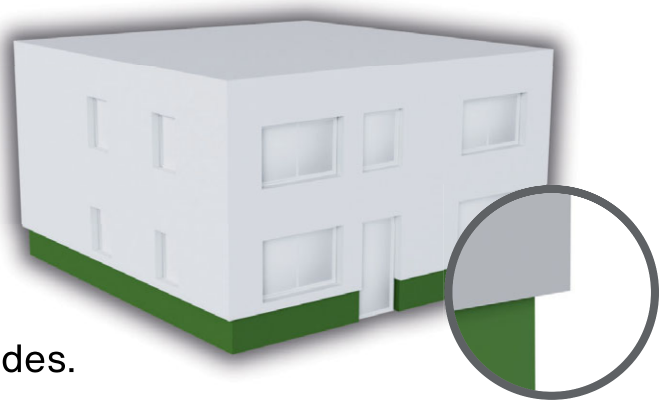

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strategy than it is to retrofit it into existing road layouts and public spaces.

A TVRA considers the potential threats to any event spaces or pedestrianised areas, including pavement seating areas and outdoor dining, along with the vulnerability of those areas to different types of attack or vehicle incursions.

Carried out as an integral part of the TVRA, the VDA considers the road layout and topography to assess the potential size, speed, and trajectory of attacking vehicles driven towards the area that needs to be protected.

Specification should always be aligned to risk. By determining risk early in the design and planning process, there may even be scope to alter road layouts, add traffic calming, introduce landscaping features, or create pedestrianised zones that mitigate risk by reducing the potential for vehicles to gain access or gather speed. In this way, HVM becomes part of a wider, more holistic landscaping strategy, facilitating the creative process and supporting urban design inspired by public safety and town centre security, rather than restricted by it.

This organic approach to integrating risk mitigation with design can often offset the cost of carrying out a TVRA and VDA by reducing the amount of HVM required and opening up creative approaches to active travel strategies, directing footfall towards local businesses and creating a town centre layout that works for how people actually use the public realm.

What's more, by considering risk more holistically, public realm projects can also boost criminality deterrence, with measures such as improved lighting, CCTV, and reduced opportunities for hostile reconnaissance all included in a robust TVRA and counter terrorism consultancy process.

More than bollards

Where HVM is required, it's important to understand that there is no one-size-fits-all, off-the-shelf approach. The specified system must be correctly rated for the identified risk; something is not better than nothing, because a poorly specified, inadequate HVM system will only provide a false sense of security.

While bollards may sometimes be the preferred choice to complement the design, there is a huge array of aesthetic and practical choices. The rated protection can be disguised as design features; from street furniture and planters, through to cycle racks and public art. HVM could even be integrated as wayfinding signage, combining rated protection with a map of the area and safety information as part of a joined up approach to resilience, preparedness and public information.

Next generation

Our old towns and cities are adapting to meet the needs of new business landscapes and new generations – they must also adapt to mitigate evolving safety and security threats. By integrating risk mitigation with the design process, protecting people in the public realm becomes a creative opportunity. More insight is available from the National Protective Security Authority's (NPSA) Public Realm Design Guide for HVM.

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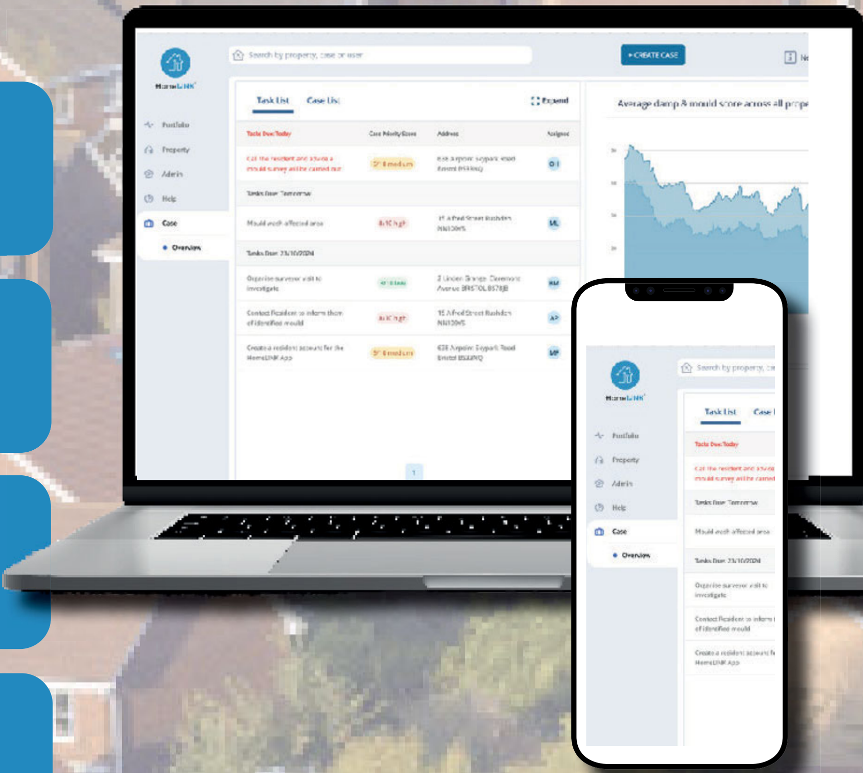

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Warringtonfire celebrates successful grand opening for Birchwood Park laboratory

With over 150 guests in attendance, **Warringtonfire**, part of Element Materials Technology, a global leader in testing, inspection and certification (TIC) services, recently hosted the grand opening of its new state-of-the-art fire resistance testing facility at Birchwood Park, Warrington.

To mark the occasion, customers, academics, trade bodies, media and local dignitaries were given a tour of the new facility as well as the opportunity to hear from some of the leading minds in the construction industry on a range of critical safety topics. Speakers included Element's CEO, Jo Wetz, technical experts in fire resistance from the company, as well as keynote speaker, Paul Morrell OBE, who previously served as Chief Construction Adviser to the UK government.

Peter Barker, Technical Policy Manager for Warringtonfire, and Paul Morrell both called for a cultural shift within the industry towards better collaboration, a better understanding of what due diligence means, and putting safety at the heart of all key construction decisions.

The day also included an official ribbon-cutting ceremony with Mr Deputy Mayor of Warrington, Councillor Mo Hussain, in attendance to do the honours.

Jason Dodds, VP, Built Environment, Element Materials Technology, said: "The launch of this state-of-the-art fire resistance laboratory is a significant investment for our company and a major step forward for the industry as a whole.

"With growth in the construction industry forecasted over the next two years by the Construction Products Association, coupled with an increasingly complex regulatory landscape, this new facility helps us meet the needs of our customers."

The new £24m fire resistance testing laboratory, spanning 101,000ft², is one of the largest in Europe and began operating in January 2025. Further investment is planned for the laboratory, and it will eventually house seven industry-leading fire resistance testing furnaces, with five already in operation.

It was also built with sustainability and environmental factors front of mind, with extensive measures in place to maintain air quality, reduce energy use and minimise impacts. These measures include advanced abatement systems for efficient smoke cleaning, a gas infrastructure set up to accept green gas and hydrogen mixes once available in the area, cutting-edge power supply units, and low-energy lighting and heating.

Jason concluded: "We'd like to thank all our guests for supporting the grand opening. This includes our loyal customers, the media, our principal contractors – Tilbury Douglas – for bringing our vision for this laboratory to life, and all our hardworking colleagues for the great work that they do every day. It is through their dedication to fire safety that we are staying true to our ultimate goal of 'Making Tomorrow Safer Than Today'."

For more information visit ***www.warringtonfire.com/about-warringtonfire/warrington-site-relocation-and-expansion***

JH26

Achieve Building Safety Regulator compliance with AliDeck

Navigating the new Building Safety Regulator (BSR) requirements has become a key challenge across the construction industry. With stricter regulations and greater accountability, it's essential that suppliers and contractors work together to ensure full compliance throughout every stage of a project.

At **AliDeck**, we understand the pressures the BSR introduces and are committed to supporting our clients every step of the way. Our aluminium balcony components are non-combustible, fully tested, and designed to meet the highest safety standards – helping you stay ahead of regulatory demands.

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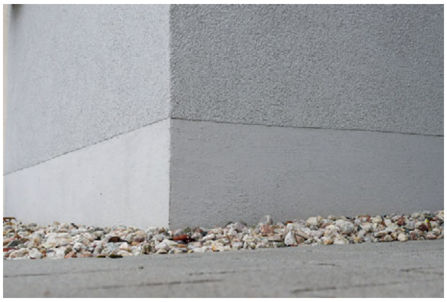


Wetherby Wall Systems launches the UK’s first fire-tested below DPC insulation system

Wetherby Wall Systems, part of the ROCKWOOL Group, is delighted to announce the launch of SOQEL A2, a fully compliant, impact-resistant, and moisture-protected External Wall Insulation (EWI) system designed for below damp-proof course (DPC) applications.

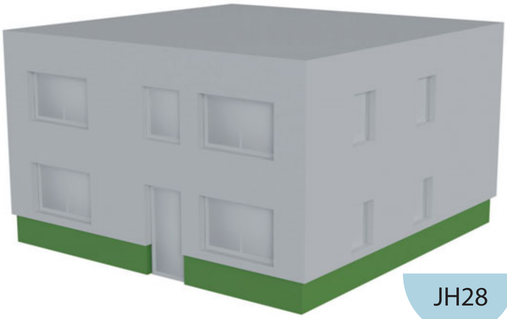
SOQEL A2 sets a new benchmark for fire safety and durability in external wall insulation. It’s the first fully fire-tested system for below DPC applications, meeting the latest A2-s1,d0 fire classification required for materials in buildings over 11m. This ensures compliance with the UK Building Regulations and provides a solid solution for the construction industry.

With UK building regulations now requiring that materials used in buildings over 11m must meet a minimum A2-s1,d0 fire rating, SOQEL A2 offers architects, contractors and specifiers a reliable solution in line with these regulations. Designed for use in below DPC areas, as well as balconies, walkways and plant rooms, the system improves fire resistance, impact protection and long-term moisture durability. Unlike traditional solutions, such as bitumen paint, SOQEL A2 delivers a more effective and resilient alternative.

This game-changing system integrates Coverrock x-2 pre-coated insulation, which ensures a strong and durable bond for coatings while protecting the A1-rated Stone Wool core during installation. Paired with Heck K+A SL coating and Heck CER Mesh, it also provides superior impact and moisture resistance, withstanding harsh weather and high foot traffic in exposed areas like balconies and plant rooms.

SOQEL A2 incorporates Heck 4S Silicone Render, ensuring a seamless finish that matches the overall façade system. Unlike traditional below DPC treatments, which may distrupt the building’s aesthetics, it offers a modern, integrated look while maintaining full regulatory compliance.

For more information about SOQEL A2 or to discuss your project requirements, visit **www.wall-systems.co.uk**

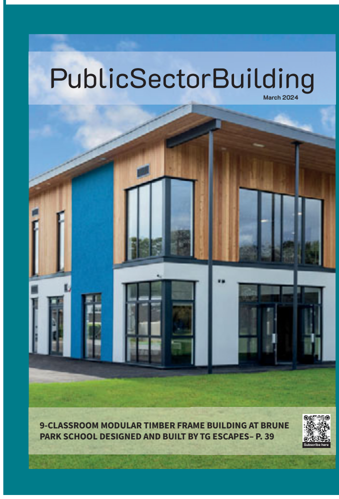


JH28

PSB – Public Sector Building

Launched in 1989, Public Sector Building (PSB) magazine is a well-established in print and online building industry product book designed specifically for the public sector specifier.

Distributed free-of-charge to over 13,200 print and digital subscribers, PSB is a vital link for those responsible for the building and maintenance of social and affordable housing, educational establishments, healthcare facilities and sports and play spaces which fall under the remit of councils, local authorities and housing associations.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‘Brilliant at Booghe Toys’ as Gerflor supplies world class DLW Linoleum

Booghe Toys in Birmingham specialises in some of the most exciting children’s toys on the market. Delivering a durable and colourful flooring solution for its new sales floor was provided by international flooring specialist **Gerflor** which supplied 550m^2 of its hard-working DLW Linoleum to help create a striking and contemporary space which would make a remarkable and breath-taking design statement and help deliver a fun environment for children and adults alike.

Commenting on the project Lee Jacovou, Retail Key Account Manager for Gerflor said: “The designer contacted Gerflor looking for a broad colour palette of flooring options to achieve their desired design concept. I was able to make a proposal and suggested the vibrant plain designs from both the DLW linoleum and Mipolam Affinity ranges. The client and the designer are both extremely pleased with the final result.”

The challenge of designing an interior space that would provide both fun and functionality was undertaken by Birmingham-based ATRIO design. Andrii Yeksarov, Co-Founder and Creative Partner at ATRIO said: “We specified Gerflor DLW flooring because of its high performance, its superior durability and aesthetic versatility. Both we and the client are extremely delighted with the outcome.”

The installation was the responsibility of Macclesfield-based, Sylk Flooring. Matt Hopley, Director, Sylk Flooring commented: “We think the Gerflor DLW Lino flooring installed at Booghe Stores looks exceptional and modern. We will certainly continue to specify, and install Gerflor products again in the future, as they consistently deliver both high quality and a stunning range of designs and colours.”

Gerflor believes that architecture has the power to improve people’s lives, and that nature is the greatest source of inspiration. With the DLW Linoleum offer, Gerflor provides architects, specifiers and designers with a collection of 159 colours, which are all natural designs, enhancing the sustainability and creativity of all interior projects.

Website: www.gerflor.co.uk
Email: contractuk@gerflor.com

JH229

BT welcomes employees to new Dundee HQ

Contractor and interior fit-out specialist **GRAHAM** has completed the multi-million-pound fit-out of BT’s new office in Dundee.

The telecoms giant has moved from its previous premises on Ward Road, where it was situated since 1976, to 2 Greenmarket at West Marketgait, in the city centre and close to the waterfront.

Aiding city-wide regeneration efforts and designed by architect, HAUS Collective, the state-of-the-art office space includes bespoke features to enhance employee wellness, including communal and collaborative spaces, a games area and an in-house coffee shop.

The five-storey, 76,000ft^2 building’s sustainability features include a self-vegetating “brown roof”, where seeds dropped by birds or carried by the wind will grow, and two electric vehicle charging points. Staff are also encouraged to commute to work via active travel, with on-site shower rooms and clothes drying facilities available.

The fit-out is part of BT’s Better Workplace Programme, the largest workplace improvement and consolidation scheme of its kind ever undertaken in the UK. Customer service staff operate from the Dundee hub, helping communities, individuals and businesses to become better connected.

Daniel Chesney, Strategic Development Director for Interior Fit-Out at GRAHAM, said: “By prioritising sustainability and the health and wellbeing of its staff, BT has created a space which not only reflects modern ways of working but also emphasises that an office is more than just a place to work.”
www.graham.co.uk

wellbeing: a driving force behind *high-value warehouse refurbishment*

***Lee Stuart,** director at Pexhurst explores the shift toward creating people-centric warehouse environments. From prayer rooms and biophilic design to upgraded washroom facilities and on-site leisure amenities, he highlights the growing emphasis on making industrial spaces more attractive and functional for modern workforces...*

Staff wellbeing and interior design is nothing new in the commercial sector, but historically it has been rarely discussed in the industrial and logistics sector. That is beginning to change. With shifting workforce expectations and growing recognition of the link between workplace environments and productivity, warehouse refurbishment is evolving to better support employee wellbeing.

Asset owners across the industrial and logistics sector are beginning to see the value in refurbishment projects that create enhanced working environments, as well as more attractive, sustainable units for potential tenants.

This is especially important at a time when 9 million working age adults in Britain are economically inactive. Though long-term sickness is the leading cause of the problem, some of the population need encouragement to return to employment. So, a heightened focus on staff wellbeing and inclusive work environments is surely set to help retain workers and boost recruitment.

More and more often we are engaging with clients early to ensure that fit-out and refurbishment projects align with their culture and ethos. Warehouses serve a very practical purpose and in many cases conform to common design criteria, but asset owners are beginning to opt for bespoke design configurations that do more than meets the eye.

Acknowledging our diverse communities, the incorporation of prayer rooms is something that we are seeing more frequently. From a design perspective, this is not a challenging task. However, it raises the importance of spatial planning so that new features can work seamlessly alongside those that already exist and cannot be replaced.

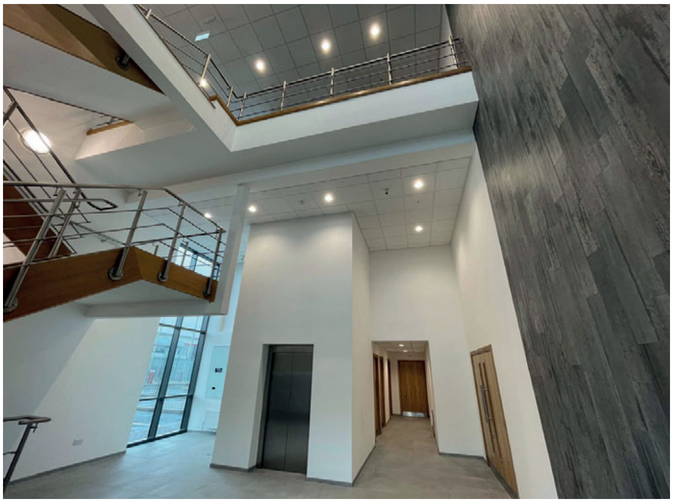
Workers are set to benefit from the creation of more homely workplaces. This is being achieved through greater consideration of decoration, finishes and non-working areas. There are numerous examples to acknowledge here, including biophilic design features such as green walls, breakout areas to offer leisure opportunities, and significantly enhanced quality of essential features such as washrooms – which now compare to hotel standards.

Outside of warehouse walls, there is a growing trend of additional infrastructure with workers in mind. Simple additions such as cycle shelters add to site accessibility and the opportunity for staff to maintain healthy lifestyles, while in rare cases there are sports facilities being built – such as gyms or basketball and padel courts.

The net zero agenda is a major catalyst in the refurbishment of warehouses across the UK. Many asset owners are using the BREEAM certification as a marker of success, but the growing focus on wellbeing means there is an opportunity to also prioritise certifications such as WELL, which helps organisations demonstrate commitment to wellbeing by earning the highest pinnacle of health achievement for their buildings.

A challenge for asset owners is the potential cost of warehouse improvement projects. However, investment is helpful in securing tenants and earning the necessary rent to create the desired financial return. With new warehouses offering more to tenants than they have in the past, it's important that existing warehouses remain attractive through quality refurbishment projects.

The demands of our workforce are always changing, so it's important that asset owners remain aware of the different ways they can develop the best possible workplaces for career growth and overall wellbeing.



JH231

Maintenance capabilities of ASWS are key to continued steel window performance

A long-term working relationship between **Associated Steel Window Services (ASWS)**, and one of the country's leading contracting companies, underlines the importance of accessing appropriate skills and experience when projects require the maintenance or renovation of traditional steel windows, or other fenestration – be it metal or timber. The London-based specialist has won a number of contracts with MACE Group over recent years, including within the iconic Woolwich Arsenal and Battersea Power Station buildings, as well as in the heart of London's Fitzrovia district, where ASWS was appointed, not just on the basis of competitive pricing, but also the deployment of teams of skilled craftsmen at short notice. The latter included window fixers, service engineers, carpenters, glaziers and silicone applicators.

Upton boilers installed at Doncaster Racecourse

JH233

When Doncaster Racecourse needed an efficient and space-saving solution to replace its existing boilers, a new Upton floor-standing modular boiler system from **Hamworthy Heating** was specified to efficiently satisfy high demands with minimum disruption to the busy racecourse. Upton modular boilers feature an aluminium heat exchanger and can deliver 1MW output from less than $1m^2$ of floor space. Readily available and delivered fully assembled to site for easy installation, this design makes optimal use of space in the plant room at Doncaster Racecourse. Additionally, its lightweight construction means that there was no need for costly cranes or heavy lifting equipment during installation. Available in 18 different models with outputs ranging from 100-1,050kW, the selected Upton floor-standing modular boiler system at Doncaster Racecourse delivers an output of 900kW.

JH232

Partnership delivers beautiful exteriors

Haddonstone was commissioned by M Group to produce high-quality cast stone architectural components for a private residence in Hertfordshire. Each standard profile cast stone design was handmade to order in Haddonstone's TecStone (wet-cast limestone) material, in classic Portland colour. An impressive bespoke portico, at the front, completely transformed the property's design, adding kerb appeal as well as practicality. The two smooth columns, with stylish Tuscan capital detail, are raised on cast stone pedestals and bases. Haddonstone also produced window surrounds, as well as copings and pier caps for the entrance gateway and garden walls. The garden room's architectural stonework comprised a door surround, copings and parapet roof.

JH234

Croft introduces new Cremone Bolt collection

Luxury British architectural hardware brand, **Croft,** proudly presents its new Cremone Bolt offering – an elegant collection of traditional, meticulously crafted bolts. Comprising three individual styles, each design promises to add grandeur to French doors, windows, cabinets and internal doors.

Combining elongated, solid brass bars in a choice of three distinctive designs – Haute, Contour, and Luxe, this collection seamlessly combines traditional elegance with intricate beauty and detail. The Luxe design is crafted to transform large casement windows and doors, with the Haute and Contour Slimline bolts being most suited to cabinets and internal doors.

Simple yet graceful, the new bolts are engineered for excellence, using concealed guide inserts and a ball-bearing assisted cassette mechanism to ensure the rods glide smoothly, staying perfectly aligned for a user experience that feels as luxurious as it looks.

Cremone bolts pair beautifully with a multitude of knobs and levers from Croft's extensive portfolio. With over 25 signature finishes and patinas to choose from, homeowners can mix and match to customise cabinets and doors, creating a truly unique look in interiors. From the opulence of Polished to a rustic Antique Brass, there's a finish to complement every style and personality.
www.croft.co.uk

JH235

Gilberts proves how to balance cost-effective restoration

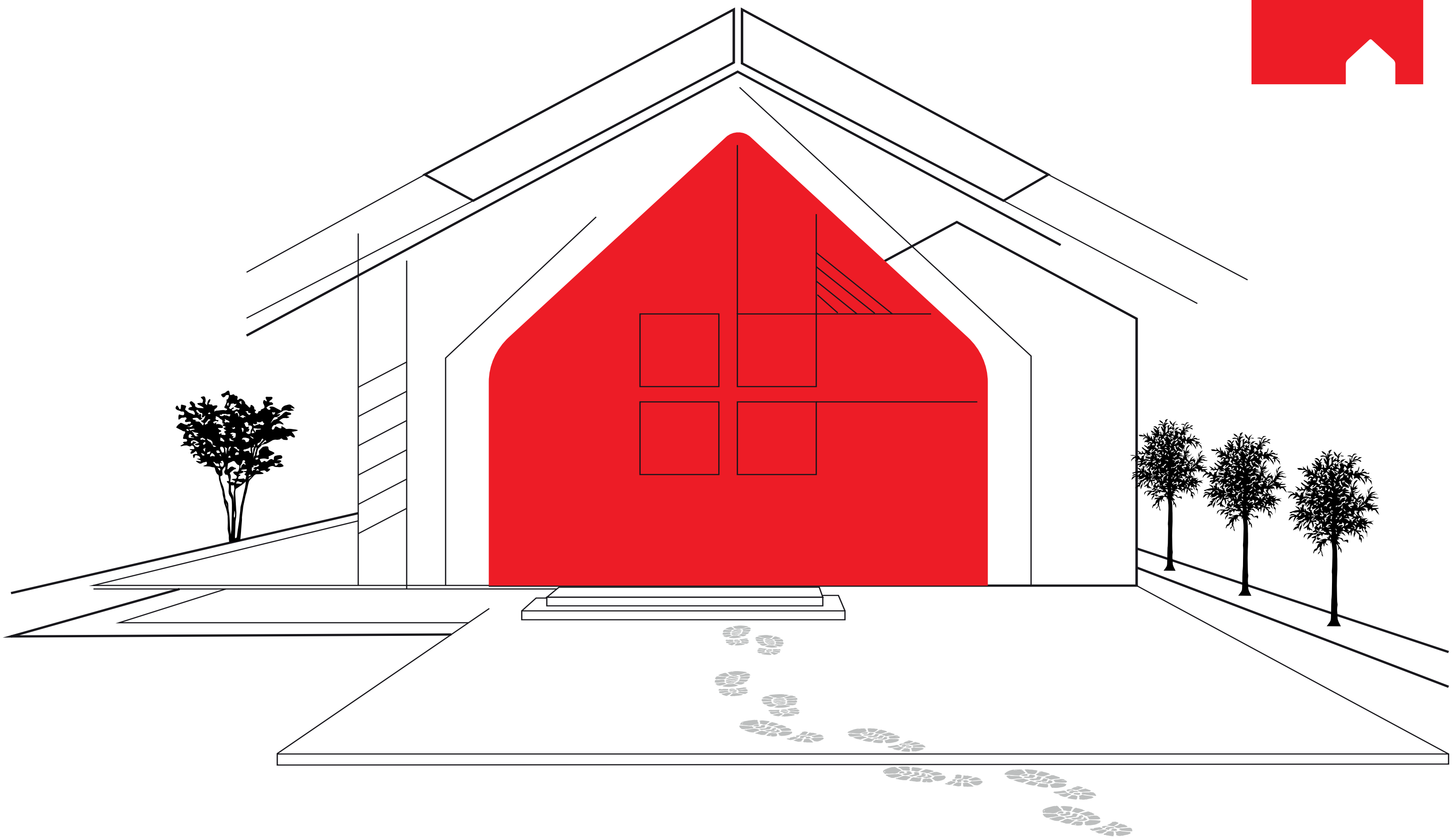
The talents of **Gilberts Blackpool** were called upon to fulfil the discreet delivery and exhaust of air to ensure compliant ambient temperature and indoor air quality for the renovation of an iconic 1930s art deco building.

The New Victoria was the largest "picture palace" outside of London when it opened in 1930. Having closed its doors in 2000, the derelict building was facing demolition. It is being revitalised by Bradford Live into a modern, low carbon entertainment space with emphasis on retaining as much of the original interior décor as possible.

Gilberts has provided a raft of grilles and diffusers, including bespoke variations to enhance their intrinsic performance within the confines of the existing building fabric.

In the ballroom, M&E contractor Pitts Wilson has installed Gilberts' drum louvres mounted 9m above the floor behind lattice style panelling in the ceiling.

The bar area features Gilberts' jet nozzles in purpose-designed banks of three, complimented by discreet jumbo slot diffusers within the ornate ceiling to achieve the required degree of airflow and throw whilst addressing the limitation of branch ducts imposed by the interior design. In the main theatre, Gilberts' drum louvres achieve the air circulation, supported by fixed and adjustable grilles for supply and extract.
https://gilbertsblackpool.com/



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JH30

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